

garments constitute a very sizeable portion of our total garment export. In the new bilateral agreements that we have concluded, special dispensations have been obtained for handloom products in almost all the quota countries. It is part of Government policy to give maximum thrust to the development of handloom including exports.

MR. SPEAKER: Next question - Shri Patil - not there. Shri Ramaiah - not there. Shri Basavaraju not there.

PROF. K. K. TEWARY: This is a very important question.

MR. SPEAKER: What can I do? I am helpless. (*Interruptions*)

PROF. N. G. RANGA: This deals with the External Affairs. With your permission, let me say, we wish a happy new year to our Prime Minister whose birthday was celebrated yesterday. We wish him all the best for this year and many years to come.

Earnings from Frog Legs

*383. PROF. K. V. THOMAS: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the foreign exchange earnings from frog legs before its export was banned;

(b) the number of varieties of frog existing in India;

(c) how many of these were used for export; and

(d) whether there is any proposal to lift the ban?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSI): (a) The foreign exchange earnings from export of frog legs were of the order of about Rs. 7 crores per annum during the three years preceding the ban.

(b) The number of varieties of frogs

existing in India is reported to be 116 which belong to 27 species.

(c) Three species of frogs were used for exports.

(d) No, Sir.

PROF. K. V. THOMAS: The export of frog legs was banned due to an objection by environmental experts. They say that frogs being killed means ecology is being killed. The answer of the hon. Minister clearly says that out of 27 species we make use of only three species for exports. So, on the basis of this fact that only three species are being used for export, will the Government re-consider lifting the ban?

SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSI: There is no proposal to re-consider lifting the ban which is already in operation. I would like to inform the hon. Member that the decision was taken after careful consideration on the aspect of ecology with the opinion of environmental experts.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN: Sir, I am thankful to the Minister for saying that export of frog legs is banned because it has been scientifically proved that the killing of frog legs will affect the environment. Because of this ban, I am told that some one lakh persons have become unemployed I would like to know....(*Interruptions*).

AN HON. MEMBER: Is it in your constituency? (*Interruptions*).

PROF. P. J. KURIEN: Not at all in my constituency...(*Interruptions*). What is this, Sir? Everybody is asking questions. You allowed me only, Sir.

While I fully agree with the Minister in banning the export of frog legs, and thank the Minister for that, I would like to know whether he has some schemes for providing alternate employment to those people who have lost their jobs because of banning of export of frog legs.

SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSI: Sir, so far as the banning of frog legs is concerned, I would like to inform the hon. Member that it is the marine exporters who are to engage the people for their activities on two counts. One is the manufacturing process and the other is the trapping process. The trappers are the licence holders. Obviously when the ban is there, we cannot protect them in that profession. But the problem is created due to the ban on exporting the frog legs. As regards the problem of unemployment as a result of that, I think the concerned State Governments will look into the problem effectively and see how to deploy them in some other areas.

AN HON. MEMBER: Ask them to catch rats and snakes.

Permission for Cotton Monopoly Purchase in Maharashtra.

*384. SHRI UTTAM RATHOD: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have given permission for cotton monopoly purchase in Maharashtra only for three years; and

(b) what is the reason to give periodical extension to this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA): (a) Government have given approval for the continuance of the cotton monopoly scheme in Maharashtra for a period of 3 years with effect from 1.7.1986.

(b) Government have given periodical extensions to the scheme, so as to enable a critical review of its functioning and impact on the cotton economy of the country from time to time.

SHRI UTTAM RATHOD: Sir, this cotton monopoly scheme was started in Maharashtra for the benefit of the cotton producers and according to most of the cultivators, we find that the scheme is working for the benefit of the cotton grow-

ers. When we approach the Government, they generally give us extension for a year or two. May I know how long will the Government take to have a critical review of the whole scheme. It is more than fifteen years now. Simultaneously, I would like to know whether they have done a critical review of the free trading cotton for more than eighteen years and if so, what is the finding. Does it work in favour of the cultivators or against them?

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA: Sir, as I said, we have already given approval for the continuance of the scheme for three years with effect from 1.7.1986. The reason I have given is that according to the prevailing economic situation, we have to review the scheme from time to time. If we decide for ever, I think grave consequences will follow. For example, the scheme has been incurring tremendous losses in some areas whereas in some areas it has been working well. There were number of shortcomings in the scheme as it was worked before. So, looking to all these factors, we have decided that the scheme should be continued for three years, during the course of which we will be able to judge its working, and when the time for review and its extension comes, we will be able to take a reasonable decision.

SHRI UTTAM RATHOD: What about the next part, Sir? Is it more than beneficial than the free trade or not? You just reply to that.

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA: It has certain advantages and certain disadvantages. For example, the Corporation which was handling this, reportedly incurred an estimated loss of Rs. 350 crores last year. So, no blank statement can be made whether it is good or bad. If you work it in a particular way or in a particular situation, it is helpful, but if not, then it is not.

MR. SPEAKER: The Question Hour is over.