

The Minister of International Trade in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (Shri Manubhai Shah): (a) and (b). Yes Sir. An agreement was concluded between the Governments of India and the United States of America in May, 1962, for supply to India cotton worth \$27 million (2,20,000 bales of 400 lbs. each) under the U.S. Public Law 480 programme. Also one lakh bales of PL 480 cotton was received in this season, against releases of the previous season.

With the above quantities under PL 480 programme, the total import quotas of cotton released during the current season (September 1961-August 1962) come to about 12 lakh bales.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Shri Rameshwar Tantia: May I know what is our total requirement in imported cotton and what are the different sources that it is imported from?

Shri Manubhai Shah: It depends upon the local crop. The crop failed last year so much and we had only 43 lakh bales. That was why the import programme was 12 lakh bales. We are generally short by 1 million bales.

Shri Rameshwar Tantia: May I know, cotton being an important commodity, what steps the Government are taking to attain self-sufficiency in it?

Shri Manubhai Shah: As the House knows, there is the package programme. Recently, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture in consultation with the Planning Commission has decided to concentrate more on allowing the newly irrigated areas for cotton crop, better seeds and other facilities.

श्री यशपाल सिंह : क्या यह सच है कि सिर्फ ४० या ५० मिलें ऐसी हैं जिनमें अमरीकी कपास खप सकती है, और बाकी मिलोंको इसलिये जुर्माना भुगतना पड़ता है कि वे

अमरीकी कपास इस्तेमाल नहीं कर सकती हैं ?

श्री मनुभाई शाह : ऐसी बात नहीं है। जो चाहें वे अमरीकी कपास मंगवायें। जितना कपड़ा हिन्दुस्तान की जनता को चाहिये और एक्सपोर्ट के लिये रुई तो मंगवानी ही पड़ती है, चाहे वह एक कट्टी की हो या दूसरी कट्टी की। इसलिये जो इसका बोझा है उसको सबको एक तरह से उठाना पड़ता है।

Shri Tyagi: Is it long staple cotton for local consumption or cotton for the manufacture of coarse cloth which is generally exported?

Shri Manubhai Shah: It is about 70 per cent medium and coarse cotton which is required for coarse and medium cotton cloth and 25 per cent for superior fine and super-fine variety.

Shri Venkatasubbaiah: May I know whether this import is commensurate with the starting of new textile mills in this country and whether these also will be able to get the import quota?

Shri Manubhai Shah: That is our endeavour. The first thing is, according to the national programme, we should be self-sufficient in a primary commodity like cotton. These efforts are continuing. In the meantime, we have got to feed our industry both for internal consumption and export. That is why the import programme.

Export of Bananas to U.S.S.R.

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- { Shri Umanath:
- { Shri Indrajit Gupta:
- { Shri Mohammad Elias:
- { Shri S. C. Samanta:
- *278. { Shri Subodh Hansda:
- { Shri B. K. Das:
- { Shri M. L. Dwivedi:
- { Shri A. V. Raghavan:
- { Shri Pottekkatt:
- { Shri M. K. Kumaran:

Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of U.S.S.R. have offered to purchase Rs. 2 crores worth of Indian bananas annually;

(b) if so, whether Government have agreed to the offer; and

(c) the steps contemplated for purchase and transport of bananas?

The Minister of International Trade in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (Shri Manubhai Shah): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). We are discussing the matter with the Government of Soviet Union.

Shri Umanath: Since the cutting orders have to be based on the date of arrival and loading of ships, does the Government contemplate procurement through direct field contract by State Trading Corporation instead of tenders and if not, what other measures are being taken?

Shri Manubhai Shah: The broad measure is, we shall buy banana from the co-operatives of the growers and either the S.T.C. or the co-operatives of banana growers will export either to the Soviet Union or various other destinations. The Shipping Corporation of India which, again, is a public sector corporation is chartering some freighter ships for faster speeds to reach the various destinations

Shri Umanath: Two crores worth of plantains will involve 30,000 to 40,000 acres. Has the Government taken into account the fact that it will lead to shooting up of indigenous consumption prices of bananas and if so, may I know whether any measures are contemplated now even at this stage to avert the price rise?

Shri Manubhai Shah: As I said in the answer neither 2 crores nor any amount has been yet negotiated or fixed. The whole matter is under discussion. I should certainly request the House to see that if more exports have to take place, the price restriction measures have to be considered

in a manner that the exports do not suffer.

Shri Subodh Hansda: May I know, as, the Government contemplate the export of banana, what steps the Government are taking to give incentives to the banana growers to give more production?

Shri Manubhai Shah: The fact is that much of the banana crop is not looked after in a scientific way, it goes to waste. Firstly, this will give price support. Finding a foreign market will give them larger avenues for further production in future. All this will raise the prosperity of the grower and export promotion of the country.

Shri Malaichami: May I know the area favourably placed in our country for exporting bananas?

Shri Manubhai Shah: That hardly arises out of the question.

Shri Hem Barua: May I know if the recent statement of our Defence Minister about Indian bananas to the effect that if he says that Menon ate a banana, the press reports that banana ate Menon has an adverse effect.....

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. I have many times asked the hon. Members not to preface a question with arguments, inferences, imputations or defamatory statements. He combines all the things that are prohibited.

Shri Hem Barua: May I submit in all humility that my question would be....

Mr. Speaker: This is not a question to be put, whether somebody eats a banana or the banana eats him.

Shri Hem Barua: That is a very important statement.

Mr. Speaker: I am not concerned with that statement. He may put the question straight now.

Shri Hem Barua: I just want to know whether a statement of this kind about Indian bananas might not affect the export of our bananas to the Soviet Union.

श्री काशीराम गुप्त : क्या मैं जान सकता हूँ कि उत्पादकों की सहकारी समितियाँ कहाँ कहाँ बनायी जा रही हैं या बनायी जा सकती हैं ?

श्री मनुभाई शाह : इनको बनाने के लिये हम उत्तेजन देंगे । लेकिन फिलहाल देश में बहुत जगह सहकारी मंडलियाँ हैं जो बनाना के ग्राइंग का और एक्सपोर्ट का भी काम करती हैं , हम उनको सहायता देंगे ।

Shri Sonavane: May I know how many days it will take by the quickest transport to take these bananas to the USSR, and if the period is long, what steps are being taken to save the bananas from rotting?

Shri Manubhai Shah: Originally, this was exactly the real trouble, that we had only located charter ships; it will take about 25 days, and that is, according to international standards, completely time-barred. But, now, we have located during the last few days some ships which will take to Odessa in fifteen days. These are all matters of detail which are being gone into.

Exports to Afghanistan

*280. **Shri Hem Raj:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the export of tea and artificial silk has received a set-back due to the exorbitant Air freights from Amritsar to Afghanistan;

(b) whether Government have received any complaints and representations in the matter;

(c) if so, whether Government have made any investigations; and

(d) the action government propose to take in the matter?

The Minister of International Trade in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (Shri Manubhai Shah): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Some representations were received by the Government regarding accumulation of tea at Amritsar

(c) and d). There were some complaints. Special Chartered Flights were arranged to airlift the accumulated tea from Amritsar to Afghanistan.

Shri Hem Raj: May I know how much of the accumulated tea has so far been exported to Afghanistan, and what amount still remains to be exported?

Shri Manubhai Shah: Large quantities have gone. As a matter of fact, in spite of the obstructions which have been placed recently by our neighbouring country in travel by land route from India to Afghanistan, due to these chartered flights we have slightly increased our export of tea to Afghanistan.

Shri Ham Raj: May I know whether it is a fact that due to the accumulation, the prices of tea came down, and if so, whether the prices have since been restored?

Shri Manubhai Shah: It was so in the beginning, as soon as the trouble started. We took some time to charter the air flights and all that sort of thing. The prices went down a little bit at that time. Also, difficulties were caused to the local growers. But, now, things are moving very fast; the prices have not only been restored, but recently, the reports are that they have even become better

Shri Sham Lal Saraf: In view of the fact that woollen fabrics are one of the items that Afghanistan imports from here, may I know whether facilities are equally available for getting the quality wool from Afghanistan to India?

Shri Manubhai Shah: We are trying to buy as much as we can of whatever goods Afghanistan produces, and very soon, we are sending a trade