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CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

REPORTED STOPPAGE OF BOOKING FRESH CARGO AT INDIAN AIRPORTS BY INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES

श्री मधु लिमये : (बांका) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं अविलम्बनीय लोक महत्व के निम्नलिखित विषय की ओर पर्यटन और नागर विमानन मंत्री का ध्यान दिलाता हूं और प्रार्थना करता हूं कि वह इस विषय में एक वक्तव्य दें :

> "स्थान के अभाव के कारण लगभग सभी अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय एयरलाइनों द्वारा भारतीय हवाई अड्डों से, विशेषत: पश्चिमी देशों को जाने वाली उड़ानों के लिए, नये माल की बुकिंग बन्द किए जाने के समाचार जिस के कारण माल के निर्यात में गिरावट आई है तथा स्थिति का सामना करने के लिए सरकार द्वारा की गई कार्यवाही ।"

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR): The movement of cargo by air from India has increased considerably in the last few months but the carrying capacity has not increased correspondingly. During March airlines were obliged to restrict the acceptance of cargo at Bombay because of the rush. Air India also did not place any embargo on booking but had to restrict bookings except vegetables and newspapers. There was no embargo as such at Delhi, Calcutta and Madras airports but the flow of booking was restricted owing to the difficulties in forwarding cargo via Bombay which already had a continuing backlog of nearly 75 tonnes at the end of each day.

The shortage of capacity for airfreighting cargo from India has become very acute recently because of the world-wide shortage of fuel and rise in prices. There is shortage of capacity on Air India also as compared to the volume of cargo offered. Against approximately 23,500 tonnes offered for carriage in 1973, Air India was able to carry only about 13,200 tonnes *i.e.* 55 per cent on its scheduled services. In 1974, with the addition of one more all cargo service the corporation hopes to carry about 15,000 tonnes which would represent an increase of 14 per cent over the cargo carried in 1973. With a view to meeting the increased demand for cargo traffic, effective April 1, 1974 Air-India has made arrangements to operate two round-trip all-cargo services on the India-U.K.-India route. These flights can be extended either to Calcutta or Madras to uplift or discharge cargo at these points as required.

According to information available there is a total backlog of approximately 350 tonnes of cargo awaiting shipment by all international carriers including Air India at the four airports.

It is not economically feasible for Air India to increase its cargo capacity at the present moment and introduce additional all cargo services because loads available on return flights are inadequate. If Air India could get more cargo for the return flight, the operating cost would come down and make all cargo operations more economical. Despite poor return on certain commodities Air India continues to carry shipments of these in the overall interest of the country.

श्री मधु लिमये : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मंत्री महोदय ने अपने वक्तव्य में पूरी जानकारी नहीं दी है। सब से पहले उन को यह बताना चाहिए था कि हवाई जहाजों के द्वारा एयर इंडिया हो या दूसरे विदेशी जहाज हो

इन के द्वारा जो माल भेजा जाता है उस का कुल मूल्य क्या है ? इस की जानकारी उन्होंने अपने वक्तव्य में नहीं दी। उन्होंने कहा है कि 23 हजार 5 सौ टन के आर्डर हमारे पास पहुंचे थे। लेकिन हम सिर्फ 55 प्रतिशत माल भेज पाए। मेरी जानकारी के अनुसार वास्तव में इस से भी अधिक माल लोग भेजना चाहते हैं। लेकिन चूंकि आप उस को स्वीकार करने के लिए तैयार नहीं है इसलिए बहुत सारे लोग अब आप के पास आना बन्द कर दिए हैं। इसलिए यह 23 हजार 5 सौ टन का आंकडा भी ठीक नहीं है। 23 हजार 5 सौ टन में से इन्होंने कहा है कि 13 हजार 200 टन हम लोगों ने भेजा है। लेकिन आप ने किन किन चीजों को, किस निर्यात को प्राथमिकता दी है ? उस के लिए मूल्य की कसौटी है या और भी कसौटियां हैं क्योंकि कुछ लोगों ने मेरे पास शिकायत की है कि वहां भी घूसखोरी का मामला चलता है और जो लोग घूस देते हैं उन को प्राथमिकता दी जाती है। इस में बहुत सारा माल ऐसा भी है कि तस्करी करने वाले जो लोग हैं उन के द्वारा भेजा जाता है इसलिए 23 हजार 5 सौ टन के जो आर्डर आए हैं। उन का वह विवरण सदन के सामने रखें। और जो उन्होंने माल भेजा है उस का भी विवरण वे सदन के सामने रखें ताकि हम को पता चले कि क्या इस में देशहित की कोई नीति है या मनमानी ढंग से आर्डर्ज को बुक करने का काम और माल भेजने का काम किया है। मोटे तौर पर मुझे ऐसा लगता है कि जिन चीजों का वजन कम है लेकिन मूल्य अधिक है, उन चीजों को प्राथमिकता देनी चाहिए। इसी तरह से जो ऐसी चीजें हैं कि ज्यादा समय लगने से या तो नष्ट हो जायेंगी या खराब हो जायेंगी जैसे फल आदि. उन के सम्बन्ध में जहां तक मुझे पता चला है—1972–73 के प्रथम . . . हीनों में लगभग 39 लाख रुपये के अकेले आम हो भेजे गये। मेरा ख्याल है कि आम तो हवाई जहाज से ही ज्यादा भेज दिए गये होंगे। इसी तरह दूसरे फल भी हैं जैसे लीची, केला आदि, जिन का भारत से काफी निर्यात हो रहा है। मैं इस वर्ग के नीचे भी जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या फल, सब्जी आदि, जो विलम्ब होने से खराब हो सकती हैं, नष्ट हो सकती हैं क्या इन को भी प्राथमिकता दी जाती है ?

अब बहुत सारी नई नई चीजें भारत में बनने लगी हैं। कुछ साल पहले इन्होंने एक योजना बनाई थी—सान्ताक्रुज, डमडम, मद्रास हवाई अड्डों के आसपास वे मुक्त व्यापार के कुछ केन्द्र बनाना चाहते थे। इन केन्द्रों के जरिये जो निर्यात होगा क्या वह हवाई जहाज से करने का इरादा था, क्योंकि हवाई अड्डों के नजदीक इस तरह के मुक्त व्यापार केन्द्र बनाने का मतलब होता है कि उन चीजों का निर्यात हवाई जहाजों से किया जायेगा। इस की तफसील भी इन्होंने अपने बयान में नहीं दी है।

अध्यक्ष महोदय, जहां तक फलों के निर्यात का सवाल है—इस में किसी लाइसेंस की जरूरत नही होती है और सरकार इस के ऊपर 50 प्रतिशत की सब्सिडी भी देती है। मैंने यह देखा है कि जब से इन्होंने निर्यात इन्सेन्टिव योजना को चलाया है, बहुत सारी विदेशी कम्पनियां, जैसे कोकाकोला एक्सपोर्ट कारपोरेशन, इण्डियन टबेको कम्पनी और अन्य कम्पनियों ने भी इस तरह के काम शुरू कर दिए हैं, जिस से आप को डबल नुकसान होगा—सब्सिडी भी देंगे और साथ साथ एक्सपोर्ट इन्सेन्टिव लाइसेंस भी देंगे, उस में भी पैसे की लूट की जायेगी, अपना मुनाफा बाहर भेजते हैं यह अलग बात है। इस लिए मैं जानना चाहता हूं—सान्ता-

[श्री मधु लिमये]

कुञ्ज डमडम और मद्रास मे इन की जो मुक्त व्यापार केन्द्रो की योजना है उस की वर्तमान स्थिति क्या है ?

मंत्री महोदय ने एक प्रश्न के उत्तर मे यह कहा था—चूकि बहुत माल पड़ा हुआ है, इनके लिए बहुत सारे निर्यात करने वाले जहाजो की आवश्यकता है इस लिए चार्टर करने के बारे मे विचार किया जायगा। एक अन्य प्रश्न के जवाब मे उन्होने पहले कहा था—लेकिन अब जब कि यह मसला पुनः उन के सामने आया तो उन्होने अपने उत्तर मे इस का उल्लेख नही किया। मैं जानना चाहता हूं—300 टन माल पड़ा हुआ है ढोने के लिए—इसलिए क्या कोई चार्टर करने की योजना है क्या इस सम्बन्ध मे विदेशी कम्पनियो के साथ आप की कोई बातचीत चल रही है ? आप ने अपने बयान के अन्त में कहा है —

"If Air India could get more cargo for the return flight, the operating cost would come down and make all cargo operations more economical"

यह कार्गो प्राप्त करने का काम किस का है क्या मंत्री महोदय इन्तजार करते रहगे कि जब वह यहा पर बयान देगे तो उस के बाद लोग यूरोप, अमरीका या जापान से दौड कर आयेंगे और आप से बातचीत करेंगे ? पर देश मे दूतावास है हर दूतावास मे आप के कर्मशियल एटेची हैं क्या इस तरह का बिजनेस लेने का कार्य हमारे दूतावासो को नही करना चाहिए या आप का अभिप्राय यह है कि आप के बयान के बाद लोग दौड कर आपके पास आयेंगे और आप से कहेंगे कि रिटर्न फ्लाइटस के लिए हम ये चीजे निर्यात करना चाहते है—मैं इस के बारे मे आप से जानकारी चाहता हू। क्या विदेशी दूतावासो के साथ रिटर्नफ्लाइटस पर माल भेजने के लिए आयात करने के लिए आप ने कोई खोज की है पत्र-व्यवहार किया है और उस मे भी ऐसा माल लाना चाहिए जो इस देश के लिए जरूरी है। मिसाल के तौर पर मैं कहना चाहता हू कि औद्योगिक हीरो के लिए बहुत बडा मार्केट है—भारत मे चूकि मजदूरी की दर कम है कच्चे हीरों के पैदा करने वाले जो देश हैं जैसे इजराइल उन मे भी मजदूरी की दर बहुत ज्यादा है अगर आप इजराइल तथा अन्य देशों से कच्चा हीरा प्राप्त करने का प्रयत्न करे और उस को इण्डस्ट्रीयल डायमेण्ड मे परिवर्तित कर के निर्यात करे तो आमदनी बढ़ सकती है इस के बारे मे चार-पाच साल पहले भी मैं बोल चुका हू विमानो मे चीजे भेजने के लिए औद्योगिक हीरा बहुत अच्छी चीज है क्योकि जगह कम लगती है वजन कम होता है और मूल्य अत्यधिक होता है। इसलिए पब्लिक क्षेत्र मे या निजी क्षेत्र—आप चाहे जो पुकारे क्योकि इस सरकार की अयोग्यता मे मेरा पूरा विश्वास है इस झगडे को तो मैं अपने युवका पर ही छोड देता हू इस मे मेरी रुचि नही है मेरे कहने का मतलब यह था कि इस तरह के निर्यात को आप को खोज करनी चाहिए और हवाई जहाजो मे जो सीमित स्थान आप के पास है उस का इस्तमाल अधिक मूल्यवाली चीजो को विदेश भेजने के लिए करना चाहिए। हीरे के क्षेत्र मे अकेला इजराइल ही आप का कम्पीटीटर है ऐसे बहुत सारे लोग हमारे देश मे है जिन का इस धन्धे का बहुत ज्ञान है, उन की मदद से इस काम को करे इस से आप को काफी विदेशी मुद्रा प्राप्त हो सकती है।

मैं चाहता हू कि इन सारी बातो का विवरण आप हम को दे ताकि पता चले कि एअर-इण्डिया इस क्षेत्र मे अपनी जिम्मेदारी को निभा रहा है या नही क्या इस मे स्मगलिंग और घूसखोरी हो रही है ? स्मगलिंग की बात तो हम जानते है इस लिए कह रहे हैं—मैं चाहता हू कि इन सारी बातो का स्पष्टीकरण कीजिए।

श्री राज बहादुर श्रीमान माननीय सदस्य ने कहा कि उन्होने जो सूचना चाही

वह उन्हें नहीं दी गई। मैंने दोबारा उन के प्रश्न को पढ़ा, उस में मूल्यों का कहीं जिक्र नहीं है। फिर भी जो आंकड़े दिये जाते हैं और जहां तक हमारा सम्बन्ध है कि हम कितने टन माल ले जाते हैं वह हमारी एअर इण्डिया और हवाई जहाज कम्पनी का मुख्य कर्तव्य है उस के ही अनुसार हम ने सूचना दी थी। यह विदित हो है कि 23 हजार टन मे से 13 हजार टन तो एअर इण्डिया ने उठाया और बाकी अन्य कम्पनियों ले गई। 350 टन के लगभग अभी जाना है। इस सम्बन्ध मे एक बड़ा महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य यह भी है कि जब वर्ष का अन्त आता है, 31 मार्च आता है तो वे चीजें भी जो आम तौर से दूसरे जहाजों से आती हैं साल के अन्दर ही उस ट्रांजेक्शन को पूरा करने के लिए हवाई जहाजों से भेजते है, इस लिए रश ज्यादा हो जाता है। इस के अलावा फ्यूअल और बंकरिंग आयल के महंगा हो जाने से शिप्स पर भी असर पड़ा है —फिर भी कुल मिला कर हम ने जो प्रयास किया है वह कम नही है।

इसके अलावा उन्होंने पूछा कि किन चीजों के लिए प्रिफरेंस दिया जाता है — मैं बतलाना चाहता हू कि फ्रूटस फ्रेश, वेजिटेबिल्स के लिए प्रिफरेंस दिया जाता है। मैंने मुख्य प्रश्न के उत्तर मे बतलाया था —

> "Air India also did not place any embargo on booking but had to restrict bookings except vegetables and newspapers."

यह सब हम ने किया है। न्यूजपेपर्स को हम नही रोक सकते, वह तो उसी दिन जाना चाहिए, वरना वह न्यूजपेपर नही रहता, रद्दी हो जाती है, इस लिए उस को भेजना पड़ता है।

जहां तक विवरण की बात कही है माननीय सदस्य बाकायदा प्रश्न रखें तो मेरे सहयोगी श्री चट्टोपाध्याय जरूर बतायेंगे। बाकी प्रश्न जो हैं जैसे उन्मुक्त व्यापार इण्डियन टोबैको कं० और कोका कोला के बारे में ....

श्री मधु लिमये : अध्यक्ष महोदय मेरा प्रश्न था कि हम लोगों को पता चलना चाहिए इनके पास स्थान की कमी है माल 55 प्रतिशत भेज पा रहे हैं क्या माल ठीक भेजा जा रहा है या उसमें कुछ गड़बड़ी हैं? इसलिए यह प्रश्न के साथ जुड़ा हुआ है, व्यापार मंत्री इनकी बगल में सलाह देने के लिए बैठे हैं, उनसे जानकारी प्राप्त करके यह पता बता सकते हैं।

प्रो राम बहादुर: मैंने अभी विनती की कि 23,500 टन मे से 13,200 टन एयर इंडिया ने लिया है, 55 परसेन्ट और बाकी अन्य कम्पनियों ने और अब साढ़े तीन सौ टन मौजूद है चारों पोर्टस पर तो इसमें मैं कोई ऐंगज़ायटी या घबराहट व्यक्त करने की आवश्यकता नही समझता।

जहा तक उन्मुक्त व्यापारों के क्षेत्र का सम्बन्ध है मेरे सहयोगी श्री चट्टोपाध्याय विस्तार से बता सकते हैं। जहा तक मुझे मालूम है इस सम्बन्ध में कुछ प्रयोग भी किया गया है। जहा तक इंडियन टोबैको और कोका कोला का सम्बन्ध है मैं उसका एक्सपर्ट नही हूं। चार्टर के बारे में आवश्यकता हो और पूरा माल मिले तो उसको शायद हम कर सकते हैं। खोज के बारे मे और हीरा-रत्न के व्यापार के सम्बन्ध मे मधु लिमये जी को दिलचस्पी है तो मैं अपने सहयोगी से कहूंगा कि उनकी दिलचस्पी का वे ध्यान रखेंगे।

श्री मधु लिमये : अध्यक्ष महोदय : क्या आप इस उत्तर से संतुष्ट हैं ?

अध्यक्ष महोदय : संतुष्ट तो आपको ही होना है।

श्री राज बहादुर : वैसे यह जो सवाल हैं बड़ा वाडंर लाइन का हैं ।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : इसका फैसला तो मुझे ही करना है कि किस मिनिस्टर को जवाब देना है ।

श्री राज बहादुर : जितनी सूचना मुझे प्राप्त थी वह मैंने दे दी है ।

MR. SPEAKER: This is directed to the Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation.

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (PROF. D. P. CHATTOPADHYAYA) *rose—*

MR. SPEAKER: If I make a departure from the usual practice once, I will not resist it in future. I am surprised. Why do you do like this?

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE (Betul): Then we do expect that whichever minister is entrusted with answering it, he would be ready with the answer.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapura): Knowing the complications, I had called the attention of both the Ministers. You can check up from my notice.

MR. SPEAKER: It is a different matter if members create difficulties. But if the ministers themselves create difficulty, what can I do? The practice we follow is, we direct it to the minister mentioned in the first member's notice.

श्री मधु लिमये : इन्टर रिलेटेड मिनिस्ट्रीज के बारे में मैं आपसे पहले अर्ज कर रहा हूं कि इस पर आप अपना कोई फैसला दीजिए । मैं इसके अनेक उदाहरण दे सकता हूं जैसे कोका कोला का सवाल आता है तो वित्त मंत्रालय से व्यापार मंत्रालय व्यापार मंत्रालय से उद्योग मंत्रालय और फिर वहां से पता नहीं कहां चला जाता है । तो इन्टर-रिलेटेड मिनिस्ट्रीज में दोनों मिनिस्टर्स को यहां पर मौजूद रहना चाहिए ।

MR. SPEAKER: I am informed by the Secretary-General that this was sent to the Commerce Minister first and he said, it is meant for the Civil Aviation Minister. Now he gets up again. Either he should have accepted it earlier or taken the stand that it concerns the other minister. Now I have no alternative except to call Prof. Chattopadhyaya.

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: I would like my friend to identify the supplementary which I have not answered.

श्री मधु लिमये : आप नोट करते चले जाते हैं ?

श्री राज बहादुर : जी हां, मैं ने नोट कर लिया है ।

MR. SPEAKER: If the Commerce Minister was interested in answering it, why did he direct it to the Ministry of Civil Aviation? He could have said that it belongs partly to his Ministry and partly to the other Ministry. Then I would have tried to find a way out. Just now when the proceedings are going on, if the Minister wants to get up and say something, it would be difficult for the Chair to admit it. Anyway, I would allow him to answer any question now, but it should not be taken as a prcedent.

PROF. D. P. CHATTOPADHYAYA: I have nothing particular to say. Since the hon. Member referred to me by name, if any question is directed to me, I can answer it.

MR. SPEAKER: You settle it amongst yourselves. When a question comes in the form of a notice, the Minister says that it does not concern his Ministry and when the question is actually taken up in the House he gets up and says "I am prepared to answer it". I do not like it.

SHRI D. D. DESAI (Kaira): The hon. Minister in his reply has mentioned the total quantities air-lifted, He should have given the monthly figures for the last one year in support of his claim. Then the hon. Minister mentioned that return freight is not available and, therefore, it is not economical for Air India or the other airlines to take this freight.

The facts are that the traffic is available both ways. Except that exports exceeded imports for a short period, it is a fact that we are having regular higher imports. We are continuously relying upon aid, which means that we are paying more than we earn in foreign exchange. That shows that our imports exceed exports. Therefore, the return freight is always available. The difficulty is in the procurement of the return freight. Also, it cannot be said that only export is important. Import is also equally important because we require urgently some goods urgently and spare parts for some of the equipments.

Then the hon. Minister said that the gap is small, only 350 tonnes. The fact is that the cargo offered was 23,500 tonnes and the cargo actually lifted was 13,200 tonnes. He presumes that the rest was lifted by other airlines and the balance left is 350 tonnes. This does not satisfy us. It is quite likely that because of the perishable nature of the goods or because of the stipulation of the delivery date, some of the freight which was offered was cancelled when it was not air-lifted in time.

Then a mention was made about fuel shortage and other difficulties arising out of international problems. If the oil price has increased, the air freight has been increased substantially for outward cargo and so it can cover the increased expenses.

Now, the freight rate, if you see has exceeded very much more. For example, here, as has been stated, it is Rs. 5.90 per kg. as against Rs. 3.50 per kg. This is something which is not only more than covered but will make the operation more profitable. Therefore, to that extent, the hon. Minister may look into it. The freight rate, in fact, has been increased to Rs. 5.90 per kg. as against the old freight rate of Rs. 3.25 per kg. This makes about Rs. 2.65 per kg. more, i.e., Rs. 2650 extra per tonne.

Then, the consignments are being stated to be 23,500 tonnes. This is also not valid, because, in view of the difficulties of exporting them, the discouragement to exporters has been substantial. The hon. Minister is asked whether he has made any market study by which he can judge the total available cargo that could be put through for exports. As regards the cargo of heavier nature, for instance, recently I read a newspaper item that the entire plane was chartered for air-lifting diesel engines from a factory in Poona. This is possible. There are a large number of valuable goods produced in the country besides diamonds and other articles to which my hon. friend referred. There are other items of labour-intensive manufacture, like, machine tools, moulds, dies, components, etc. These by way of export promotion are so vital to our economy that the hon. Minister is requested to see and provide the fleet Now, there is the question of foreign exchange needed for planes that the hon. Minister whould refer to. Here again, there is a large number of aircrafts available on charter. When there is a cargo at such a remunerative rate, there is no dearth of available charters for the fights to carry the consignments from Indian airports to any part of the world.

There is one more important point that I would like to make. It is possible that outward goods are going to particular destinations and the inflow is so regulated that they do not match. Here again, the hon. Minister may ask the Commerce Minister who is sitting here to take into account our traffic bothways and so organise it

[Shri D. D Desai]

that the imports are not coming from one end and the exports are going to entirely different end. To this effect also, some system should be evolved.

It has been mentioned that Air India and other airlines are handling the cargo. The fact is that other airlines are resisting freight outwards. It may be checked up whether those airlines carried higher percentage in earlier years and, presently, due to their international policy or some sort of blocking and diversion of exports from India to other countries is done. This is also a possibility which requires to be looked into.

I would request the hon. Minister to reply to all the points which I have made.

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: If I have understood the hon. Member correctly, he has made more comments than asked questions. If I may say so, the only comment which would require some answer is about the figures. He said that I should have given figures for a certain number of years or, perhaps, for a certain number of months, which I have done.

I would invite his attention to the fact that I have given figures for 1973 and also projections for 1974, the contemplated or the planned increase of capacity of 14 per cent over the capacity of 1973 which will enable Air India to lift bigger weights. This is one particular factor to which I would invite his attention. He has expressed a view that there is no difficulty about freight being available on return flights. This is rather a very bold statement, and I would beg of him to consider that, in all destinations where our export cargoes go, it is not an invariable rule that you will get the return freight For instance, if you take a lot of vegetables, fruits, flowers and leather goods, you may not get the return cargo, of the type which admits itself to be borne on the aircraft.

Our experience has been that, while we are carrying certain commodities by air, we are also incurring losses on those commodities, but we are doing so in the interest of export promption and in the national interest.

He has referred to the question of increase in freight rates I do appreciate, and I am fully conscious of the fact, that freight rates have increased, and the freight rates have increased for reasons beyond our control. The hike in the price of crude and its aftereffect and the chain reaction resulting therefrom are well known to the House; I need not expatiate on that.

About the availability of chartered flights, there is no difficulty; they can be made available But the right of the citizen is to go to the national air carries I suppose that my friend would agree with me that, so long as we can provide those facilities, he would not ask us to go in for chartered flights from foreign air companies So far as Air India is concerned, as I have submitted earlier, Air India has restored its service which had been given up from 1st April 1974—the flight which had been cancelled earlier due to fuel shortage. In addition to this, they have also started a cargo service with ten pallets, that is, goods-container capable of clearimng 25 tonnes at time, every week to Europe Apart from that, as I have mentioned in my earlier statement, two round trips of cargo service, India-U K -India service, have also been started. From all these steps it would be obvious that we want to provide all the air space that we can for such items of our export cargo as are amenable to be carried by air.

About the rest of the comments, I can only say that they can be noted and nothing more.

SHRI D. D. DESAI: We all know that many of our power plants and even public sector industries are working below their capacity at times for

want of components; they are required to be flown here. The hon. Minister is well aware of that. Therefore, he will definitely get not only the return freight but he would find that the return freight is more profitable than the outward freight.

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: It depends on the country of destination. If, for example, fruits, vegetables and flowers are taken to Persian Gulf countries, you may not get all the spares and parts that you want in the return traffic. It is a question of each trip, each particular transaction, matching itself.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: (Rajapur): The subject-matter of this call-attention motion vitally concerns our dwindling export and the corresponding loss of foreign exchange. I had raised this vital issue during the debate on the Commerce Ministry's Demands. But since the Minister of Commerce did not find it worthwhile to make even a cursory reference to this particular aspect of the problem, I had tabled the call-attention notice.

Before I raise certain issues, I would seek a clarification from you. Sometimes, if the subject-matter of a call-attention motion is a overlapping matter between two Ministries and if we make a specific reference in our notice to both the Ministries, would it not be expected of the Ministers concerned to come forward and give the necessary clarifications? That is the clarification that I want to seek from you, Sir, because in the future such situations are bound to arise and I would request that, on such occasions, the two Ministers concerned, may be permitted to put forward their points of view because that will give us the information that we are seeking through the call-attention.

MR. SPEAKER: The time is very limited for call-attention motions. If you can split that into two and make two call-attention motions, that would be better because one Minister can deal with one subject and the other Minister can deal with the other subject; that would be better than mixing the two into one which may give rise to confusion.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: After the furnace oil crisis, it is a fact that the cargo booking has been shifted from the consumer's service to air cargo service and, as a result of that, there is some pressure on the air cargo. Here, I would like to know definitely whether it is a fact that in view of the new restrictions imposed and the stoppage of fresh air cargo booking, there has been a dwindling of exports and I would like to know the exact percentage and, as a result of that, what is the corresponding loss in terms of foreign exchange?

I would like to know whether, as a result of the new restrictions that have been imposed, whether the exports of food products, fruits Jams jewellery and leather have suffered.

In this connection I would again like to raise the issue to which a reply has not been given by the hon Minister A specific query was raised by Shri Madhu Limaye That whenever these difficulties are there—and he has rightly put forward all the difficulties—in such a situation, when a number of commodities are to be exported so as to safeguard the foreign exchange position of our country, what exactly is your policy regarding granting of priorities to various commodities? It is a specific question Shri Madhu Limaye has raised. On this question, of course, the hon Minister will have to consult the Commerce Ministry and give us a specific answer but in this particular call attention notice, it is absolutely necessary that this particular question must be specifically answered-what is the priority they allot whenever certain restrictions are to be imposed?

Is it true that as far as leather exports are concerned, leather exporters are willing to offer 500 tonnes of air-

[Shri Madhu Dandavate]

cargo but the Air India has no cargo space and, as a result of that, this particular export of leather is suffering There was some export to be made from Madras to foreign countries From Madras it has to be brought to Bombay. I would like to know specifically from the hon Minister whether from Madras to Bombay there is a backlog of 100 tonnes even at this stage. I ask a specific question and I want a categorical answer, whether it is true that because the Airlines are keen on lifting up non-bulk and small packages, export of cotton garments has been suffering the most. If export of cotton garments is suffering the most and even according to the statistics available with the Commerce Ministry, it is very clear that the foreign exchange position will become very difficult and India is in the danger of permanently losing the UK market for fresh fruits and UK and Cyprus for vegetables due to inadequate cargo space provided by Air India, will they try to solve the situation so that these exports can be actually stepped up?

As far as the exports by air are concerned, I would like to know whether the exports from Bombay itself have dwindled by 60 per cent and the average weekly rate has gone down from 40 000 kg to 10,000 kg I have asked a specific query and I want a categorical answer Is it true that exports by air can be made upto 60,000 kg if adequate cargo space is available and that it has gone down from 40,000 to 10,000 kg ? The all India Exporters' Federation has stated that if adequate space was available for air cargo, the exports would have gone up to 60,000 kg If this is the gap, what concrete steps will they take to bridge this gap?

Now, I will come to the export of mangoes I represent a constituency which exports mangoes to the world This will not merely fetch foreign exchange for our country but sweetness also will be exported to foreign countries and probably international relations will also improve. In this connection, I may point out that there has been a serious backlog as far as this aspect is concerned Export of mangoes is such that it cannot wait like the exports of other commodities. These two to three months are extremely important for the export of mangoes and it is my information and I would like to have it confirmed, whether it is true that as far as the export of this commodity, the commodity of mangoes, is concerned, which is mostly by air, as my friend Shri Madhu Limaye said, orders are placed around 3 50 lakhs kg valued at Rs 15 crores I am told that the exports of mangoes can be stepped upto the tune of Rs. 10 crores and that such an amount of exports is going to dwindle down In that case, it will make a very adverse effect on the foreign exchange position of our country Only Rs 50 lakhs worth of mangoes were sent last year That shows that there is a big gap

SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN (Kangra) Mango Specials may be arranged

PROF MADHU DANDAVATE As far as the plight of vegetable export is concerned, it is extremely bad

My friend raised this question to which he has not given a reply The question was whether it is true that the air companies have increased rates from 3 25 per k g to 5 90 per k g The export of vegetables have suffered a loss I want to know whether you will consider a concrete proposal to the effect that Air India should commence freighter services so that immediate action is taken as this mango season will last 2 to 3 months So that export of other vegetables could also be undertaken

I now come to the area which you represent, Amritsar The representatives of Punjab Rayon Fabrics Exporters Federation requested Afghanistan Government to lift their goods from Amritsar Ariana Afghan Airlines is the only airline lifting export cargo from Amritsar to Kabul in the

absence of land transit through Pakistani territory. Is it trite that Rs. 20 lakhs worth of artificial silk for Afghanistan is piled up at Amritsar? There is tremendous lack in our recovery of foreign exchange. Further delay in despatch of export consignment involves heavy losses in exports in view of the recent decision of the Silk and Rayon Export Promotion Council to withdraw the replenishing yarn on shipments of art silk fabrics to Afghanistan after April 15 under the terms of Indo-Afghan trade agreement. So long as this decision continues so long as the limit is 15th April, there will be difficulty . Is it true that the exporters have already made a request that this decision should be reconsidered? Will you kindly use your good offices to see that the interests of our exporters are taken into account so that this restriction can be removed or at least suspended for the time-being or the time-limit can be increased so that these exports would not suffer.

These are my specific queries and I request him to give specific answers to my satisfaction and to your satisfaction.

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: He made certain observations regarding diversification of goods from steamer to air services. I agree with him, Sir, because of the rise in the bunker oil prices and other factors we are faced with this situation. We have to take into account the availability of space in Air India. As I have mentioned already, Air India has given preference to fresh vegetables, fresh fruits and so on. So far as mango is concerned, he has given a figure of 10,000 k.g. In terms of tonnes it will be 60 tonnes out of a traffic of 13,200 tonnes. This is a seasonal type of fruit and it is uneconomic so far as freight rates are concerned. Despite this fact that it is uneconomic, we are still exporting.

He referred to backlog at Madras and Calcutta ports. The figures are 32 tonnes in Madras and 30 tonnes in Calcutta. If it can be rectified, I will try to do that.

About cotton garments to Afghanistan from Amritsar I am sure my colleague the Commerce Minister will look into it and give due consideration to these points.

So far as freight rates go, the exact extent of rise of freight rate will differ from commodity to commodity. I cannot really say that it will apply to all the commodities.

Because each one perhaps carries its own freight. The question of priorities, of course, is there and so far as fresh fruits, vegetables, flowers, woollen carpets, handicrafts, leather goods etc. are concerned, they are given preference.

You referred to 500 tonnes of cargo. That is also a suggestion. I would request my colleague, the Commerce Minister, to furnish you with the break-up figures. As I said earlier, these are being given preference. Also they are given some cash assistance to meet the freight cost to the extent of 50% or 70% of the F.O.B. price.

So far as projections are concerned, I think, a Working Group was set up by the Ministry of Commerce. It has already given us the projections and those projections denote that as much as 33,000 tonnes will be the available traffic by 1975 as against 23,000 tonnes in 1973; and, by the end of 1978, it would be 55,000 tonnes and by the end of 1985, it would be 75,000 tonnes. As regards shortfall in traffic, steps would be taken to see that the gap is narrowed down to the maximum extent possible.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, we move on to the next item.