

of the trains become sick and that is what happened at Gaya station. This replacement took 4 hours and 25 minutes. This is the situation in this 1 Up Kalka Mail which is considered to be one of the best trains in the Indian Railways and the passengers are required to pay heavy amount for travel by this train. At Gaya the two-tier bogey of this train fell sick and this replacement, as I have already stated, took 4 hours and 25 minutes.

In my division in South-Eastern Railway in Arda Division, there are trains numbered 421 and 422 which are never running in correct time. Previously this was given the number of 420. But this number was changed subsequently and now the number given is as 421 and 422. I challenge Mr. Nanda to prove whether these trains run to correct time. Every day these trains are running 3 hours to 4 hours late. They never run to right time. If Mr. Nanda can prove that they run to correct timings, then, I am prepared to withdraw my allegation. It is better to change the number of the train as 420, so that people will understand...

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Member should try to conclude now. . .

SHRI J. M. BISWAS : I have taken only four minutes so far. I am here after a long time.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Then, he might continue his speech tomorrow.

18 hrs.

STATEMENT RE: COTTON SITUATION

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Minister of Foreign Trade will now make a statement on cotton policy.

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI L. N. MISHRA) : Hon. Members will recall that in my statement...

MR. CHAIRMAN : The statement is a big one. So, he may lay it on the Table of the House..

SHRI L. N. MISHRA : I beg to lay the statement on the table of the House.

Statement

Hon'ble Members will recall that in my statement made in this House on 2nd December, 1970, on the cotton situation I had stated that I would call a meeting of the Cotton Textiles Consultative Board on 7th December so that suitable measures to ease the cotton situation could be evolved in consultation with the various interests concerned.

2. Accordingly, the meeting was held on 7th December. After hearing the views of all concerned, it is confirmed that the crop estimate is not less than 57 lakh bales during the current session. It was also agreed that it would be possible to meet the situation arising out of the shortage without any block closure. There is also no fear of dearth of physical stocks of cotton. The problem is really one of equitable distribution in the course of the next six or seven weeks, owing to adverse weather conditions which have affected the quantity and delayed the arrival of the early crop in the market.

3. We have decided to take the following measures immediately to remedy the situation :

- (i) Forward trading in kapas has been suspended.
- (ii) The period for non-transferable specific delivery contracts in domestic cotton has been reduced from six months to three months.
- (iii) The statutory stock limits are being reduced with immediate effect to one month stock in respect of mills in Bombay and Ahmedabad, 2½ months in respect of mills in Assam and the mills exporting 20% or more of their production; and 1½ months in all other cases. No change is being

made in the case of mills of growers' cooperatives.

- (iv) Mills are being required to submit to the Textile Commissioner a special stock return immediately and those having stocks in excess of the limits now prescribed will not be allowed to make further purchases of Indian cotton unless their stocks come down below to the reduced limits now prescribed. Genuine cases involving replacement will be considered by the Textile Commissioner on merits. Mills defaulting in the submission of the return will be severely dealt with. Similarly the traders will also submit special stock returns to the Textile Commissioner. State Governments are being requested to take similar action in respect of cooperative marketing societies and traders under their control.
- (v) The credit facilities in operation in respect of the mills, the trade and cooperatives are being reviewed with a view to reducing credit limits.
- (vi) State Governments have been requested to take all possible steps to ensure speedy movement of cotton from the grower to the mills.
- (vii) It is expected that the ICMF will evolve a voluntary scheme for mutual help to needy mills to ensure availability of cotton either by way of loans or otherwise.
- (viii) The original import programme prepared in June 1970 was for 8.25 lakh bales. When the position was reviewed recently, it was found that the gap between supply and demand might be somewhat longer. Additional imports were, therefore, immediately considered and free foreign exchange has been obtained for import immediately of 1 lakh bales of cotton from USA. Import of 1.5 lakh bales of staple fibre on an immediate basis has also been arranged. Against the original import programme, 4.53 lakh bales

has already been released. Special measures are being taken to secure the expeditious release of the balance. The mills which had been allotted the quotas have been asked to arrange import of 75% of the Sudan cotton already allotted, by 31st December and 50% of the UAR cotton already allotted, by 31st January, 1971 and the P. L. 480 cotton already allotted, immediately. The Cotton Corporation of India has also been asked to import with the assistance of the trade, further quantities of cotton available from areas other than Sudan and UAR as part of the original import programme. Efforts are also continuing to be made to arrange more imports of cotton and man-made fibres.

- (ix) In order to make available the type of cotton which is in short supply, for the weaker and exporting mills, the staple length limit for imports against current releases is being reduced from the usual 1-1/16 to 1.

4. The position is being continuously watched and further steps that may be necessary will be promptly taken. It is hoped that with the steps now being taken, it will be possible to maintain uninterrupted production, without prejudicing the legitimate interests of growers.

18.01 hrs.

DISCUSSION ON SPORTS POLICY

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, Dr. Karni Singh will raise a discussion on the sports policy of the Government of India.

Before the discussion starts, I would request every hon. Member to keep to his time, because I shall adjourn the House precisely at 7 p. m. So, if there is no reply, hon. Members should not blame me.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE (Kanpur) : At 7.5 p. m.