

the retrenchment and keep it in abeyance'. They have agreed to keep it in abeyance. Of course they did issue the circular.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT : May I know from the Government if it is a fact that the Burmah-Shell refineries want an expansion of capacity? As a matter of fact the value of trade has increased. What they are doing at present is to pressurize the Government to reduce their trading activity and the activity of the Indian Oil Company. May I know from the Government if the Minister for Labour, while discussing all these things with them, will refer to this statement and the various other activities which have come in the papers at the next meeting and tell them that before retrenching the workers they will consult the Government? Not only that, Mr. Chairman, Employees who were drawing a thousand rupees and more are on the streets now being thrown out of employment, and some of them have met hon. Members of Parliament. Their condition is pitiable because they have been completely thrown off. They were people who were drawing Rs. 2000 and Rs. 3000. May I know whether the hon. Minister has learnt about these things or not and whether the Government will enquire about these things and see that the Indianisation, which was taking place because of the pressure of the Government, does not become less, and the Indians are kept in service, and the pressure of the oil companies to reduce the activity of the Indian Oil Company is not agreed to?

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI : The question, as Mr. Mani put it, is that because of the expanding operations of the Indian Oil Company the business of the Burmah-Shell is dwindling. But that is refuted by the unions, and the figures also do not support that view. Therefore, retrenchment on that ground is a question which will have to be looked into.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Next question.

COTTON CROPS

*270. **SHRI R. P. KHAITAN :** Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the quantity, type and value of cotton crops grown in the country and the area under cotton cultivation during the last five years, State-wise;

(b) the measures taken by Government to improve the staple value of our cotton crop; and

(c) the quantity of cotton, with its description and value which was imported during the last five years and the names of the countries from where these imports were made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE) :

(a) Two statements indicating Production of Cotton in important cotton growing states variety-wise from 1962-63 to 1964-65 and 1965-66 to 1966-67 are placed on the Table of the Sabha. [See Appendix LXVI, Annexure No. 41]. Variety-wise production of cotton during 1967-68 is not available.

A statement indicating value of cotton crop during 1962-63 to 1966-67 is placed on the table of the Sabha. [See Appendix LXVI, Annexure No. 42].

A statement indicating area under cotton from 1963-64 to 1967-68 (State-wise) in important Cotton growing States is placed on the Table of Sabha. [See Appendix LXVI, Annexure No. 43].

(b) The Indian Council of Agricultural Research has recently sanctioned the All-India Coordinated Research Project on cotton for intensifying research work through out the country with a view to increasing the acre yield and also improving the staple value of cotton.

(c) A statement indicating imports of Cotton, with its description and value as also indicating countries from where imports were made from 1963-64 to 1967-68 is placed on the Table of the Sabha. [See Appendix LXVI, Annexure No. 44].

श्री आर० पी० खैतान : क्या मंत्री जी यह बतलायेंगे कि जो रिसर्च हो रहा है उसमें उन्होंने क्या क्या सुझाव दिये हैं जिससे यहां देश में ज्यादा रुई पैदा हो। दूसरे दूसरे प्रदेशों में जहां 600 पौंड प्रति एकड़ रुई पैदा होती है, यहां पर सिर्फ 115 पौंड ही रुई पैदा होती है। तो मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि इसके बारे में रिसर्च कमेटी की क्या राय है कि किस तरह से यहां पर रुई की पैदावार को बढ़ाया जा सकता है ताकि अपने देश में भी ज्यादा रुई हो सके।

SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE : Sir, it is true that the per acre yields in our country are rather poor; they are broadly about 124 kilos of lint per hectare, but in some areas, for instance in Punjab, where a considerable percentage of land under cotton has assured irrigation, there the average yield is 334 kilos, of lint per hectare. Viewed as a whole the matter is engaging Government's attention and the research is concentrated mainly on two factors, that is, improving the staple of cotton as well as the yields of cotton, but...

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR : May I know from the hon. Minister, is he aware that there is complete lack of co-ordination between the Ministries of Commerce and Agriculture in regard to promotion of more cotton growth in this country, and the Ministry of Agriculture has been denied enough funds in order to encourage more growth of cotton in this country, and the Commerce Ministry has always insisted during the last ten years on cotton import? Moreover, is he aware of his own State of Maharashtra where, two years back, the Maharashtra Government and the cotton growers there complained that their long staple cotton was not purchased by the mill-owners in the country and they insisted on imported cotton, and we were importing long staple cotton and exporting short staple cotton and we were not encouraging our cotton growers to grow more cotton in the country?

SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE : As far as the production programmes are concerned, it is the Ministry of Food and Agriculture which takes the initiative, and the Commerce Ministry does not come in for the production programmes. Even for the availability of funds we have to consult Finance, and the Commerce Ministry is not concerned as far as the availability of funds for the production programmes is concerned. The Commerce Ministry comes in as far as the imports are concerned, and I think the imports are worked out on the basis of our requirements and after taking into consideration our internal production and the projected internal production programmes. In regard to the other point—which has been raised by the hon. Member—whether our long staple cotton production has suffered as a result of lack of marketing facilities, there was some difficulty some

time back in regard to the marketing facility but that has been looked into by Government thereafter. There are still some problems but they are engaging the attention of my Ministry.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR : My question was a very specific question asking whether there is no coordination between the Ministries of Commerce, Finance, and Food and Agriculture, and whether the Food and Agriculture Ministry gets enough resources for encouraging the growth of long staple cotton in the country, or not, because I have got specific complaints from the Agriculture Ministry people who are engaged in the research work pertaining to cotton that they are not getting enough funds and the Government more relies upon imports rather than encourage indigenous production.

SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE : Sir, I do not think there is lack of coordination between the Ministries as far as this work is concerned. But may I say that I would like the support of the hon. Members and the hon. House for having more funds for research activity? And with that we shall be in a better position to persuade other Ministries to make available more funds to us.

श्री निरंजन वर्मा : क्या श्रीमन्, यह बतलायेंगे कि बड़े रेखे वाली जो काटन है, उसको अपने देश में मिश्र देश से मंगाया करते थे और पहले सारी जनता इस रेखे वाली काटन को प्रिफरेंस दिया करती थी। कुछ वर्षों से अपने यहां उसका उत्पादन प्रारम्भ किया गया है। तो क्या आप यह बतलाने का कष्ट करेंगे कि मिश्र देश से मंगाई जाने वाली काटन में किस प्रतिशत में कमी हुई है ?

SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE : Sir, the bulk of our imports are from the U.S.A., Egypt, Sudan and from East Africa, and broadly the imports vary between five lakh and eight lakh bales a year. But the bulk of them is from the U.S.A. We have made considerable progress in developing our long staple cotton, and I have given all the figures in the Statements which have laid on the Table of the House. I hope the hon. Member would be good enough to look into those figures.

श्री एम० अजमल खान : मैं एक मुक्तसर बात कहना चाहता हूँ कि हिन्दुस्तान में दो नाइल हैं। एक तो राजस्थान कैनाल और दूसरी बीकानेर कैनाल। नाइल के आसपास जिस तरह से वर्षा कम होती है उसी तरह से राजस्थान में भी वर्षा कम होती है। लाग स्टेपल काटन के लिए जरूरी है कि वह ऐसी जगह पर हो जहाँ पर नीचे से पानी दिया जाय और वर्षा न हो। तो मैं यह अर्ज करना चाहता हूँ कि अगर राजस्थान कैनाल और बीकानेर कैनाल के आसपास लोग स्टेपल काटन पैदा की जाय तो हम दुनिया भर को काटन दे सकेंगे। तीन चार वर्ष हुए मैंने फूड मिनिस्टर से इसका जिक्र किया था मगर उसके बारे में अभी तक कुछ नहीं हुआ है।

SHRI ANNASAHAB SHINDE : Sir, the Rajasthan canal is being developed and we look upon that area a very potential area for development of long staple cotton. I appreciate the hon. Member's suggestions, and when the Rajasthan canal is fully developed, I think that that area would be giving us considerable quantities of long staple cotton.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA : Mr. Chairman, Sir, from the Statements we find very revealing figures. If we look at Annexure V regarding the imports during the last five years, we find that while in 1963-64 we imported cotton to the tune of about Rs. 45 crores, in the year 1966-67 we imported cotton to the tune of about Rs. 88 crores. And during the year 1967-68 up to April we have imported cotton of the value of about Rs. 47 crores. So it will necessarily grow into a figure of about Rs. 80 crores at the end of this year. May we know from the Government what positive efforts are being made by the Government in coordination with the Ministry of Commerce to see that these huge imports of nearly Rs. 80 crores are brought to an end as early as possible because the figures are increasing and not decreasing and in spite of all the figures submitted here we find that the progress made in cotton production is discouraging? Will the hon. Minister let this House know by what time this country will become self-sufficient and it will start exporting cotton instead of importing cotton?

SHRI ANNASAHAB SHINDE : The hon. Member has referred to the figure of imports for the year 1966-67 when we had to import cotton worth nearly Rs. 88 crores. That is true but the House should know that we had a very bad crop during 1965-66 when the production was only about 47.6 lakh bales against our normal production of 55, 56 or 57 lakh bales. So our textile industry would have suffered very much and there was almost a crisis at that time and under those circumstances we had to import cotton that year. But thereafter we had a good crop and last year the imports were reduced by almost 30 to 40 crores. Our effort is always to see that cotton production is increased but I do not think it is good to go on thinking always in terms of absolute self-dependence in all commodities. As you know we are one of the important textile exporters also and that factor has also to be taken into consideration.

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : It is very obvious that the aims and purposes of the Commerce Ministry are such as to inhibit and discourage the production of long staple cotton in this country. This is a fact which has to be admitted and there is definitely a clash of opinion, if not of interests, between the two ministries. A sum of Rs. 88 crores of foreign exchange was spent last year in importing long staple cotton and all that cotton went into producing nothing but fine and superfine varieties of cloth which was used for internal consumption. Not a yard of it was exported with the result that we had to have this drain of our foreign exchange when we needed it badly for other purposes. On the other hand the area under cultivation of cotton has remained constant and has even fallen during the last two years. Whether it is due to the lack of facilities for increasing production or difficulties in marketing, whatever it is, the whole picture that emerges from all this is that the Commerce Ministry is at cross purposes with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Agriculture Ministry has not yet formulated a definite plan so that they can say that so much percentage of production would increase in five years or so much more area would be brought under cotton cultivation in five years. This is a very serious problem in which the Planning Commission must intervene and the different Ministries should be brought into harmony with

national interests. It is very imperative that long staple cotton is produced in this country and I would like the Government to assure us that something positive would be done in the Fourth Five Year Plan so far as this problem is concerned.

SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE : I am thankful to the hon. Member for the various suggestions but I would like to mention that first of all a very important coordinated research project has been taken up by the Government so that the various research activities in cotton which have been going on in different States in the different research centres in an isolated manner are now coordinated together and very effective work is being done in the field of research. There has been some positive advance as a result of that project. At the same time some package programme has also been taken up and the Centre is helping some of the package areas in a number of States. Even the States are taking up intensive cotton development in their areas and ultimately I think as a result of all these activities cotton production would go up.

SHRI B. K. P. SINHA : May I know if the Agriculture Ministry and the Government of India have made any overall assessment of the land economy of this country, how much land is under cultivation, how much more land can be brought under cultivation etc., and in the light of their assessment have they been able to decide what amount of what commodity can be produced to the best advantage in what area? I do not agree with the hon. Minister that this country's land economy is of such a nature that we can be self-sufficient in every product that comes out of the land and therefore I have put this question to the hon. Minister.

SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE : Sir, the hon. Member has put a very wide question. Our broad approach is not to increase production by adding to acerages because as is known to the House and the hon. Member the land availability in the country is limited. We cannot deforest areas and bring more land under cultivation because our forest resources are also limited. While no doubt we have to see that the production of our crops is increased the emphasis is to raise the per acre yield. But the main difficulty in the case of

cotton is the irrigated percentage is only 16 per cent as compared to the total percentage of cotton area. So we have to see that more irrigation facilities are made available to cotton. With that I am quite sure like Punjab the per acre productivity will go up and our total production is expected to meet broadly all our requirements.

DR. K. RAMIAH : Will the Minister agree that in spite of all the research in the near foreseeable future we won't be able to produce within the country all the quality cotton which we are now using in the industry and therefore will he agree that there is necessity for a change in the policy because most of the mills do not use a single bale of Indian grown cotton in their mills? They entirely depend upon imported cotton. Whether this does not need a revision of policy is what the country has to examine.

SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE : I will pass on the suggestion to the Commerce Ministry.

*271. [The questioner (Shri D. L. Sen Gupta) was absent. For answer vide col. 1882 *infra*.]

FOOD CORPORATION OF INDIA

*272. **SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA :** Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Food Corporation of India failed to achieve the objective for which it was set up; and

(b) if so, whether it is proposed to wind up the Corporation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE) :
(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA : May I know whether the hon. Minister is satisfied that the Food Corporation is performing all the functions it was expected to perform from its headquarters at Madras. And this morning I find that a new Chairman has been appointed, Mr. Shah Nawaz.