

textile industry has been facing difficulties both on account of high prices of indigenous cotton as well as inadequate supplies. Various representations had been received in this regard from mill-owners etc. urging Government to import sufficient quantities of foreign cotton to augment available supplies in the country. Government are fully seized of the situation and are taking necessary remedial measures to meet the maximum possible requirements of the industry.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: May I know whether cotton production in the country has gone down, and if so, whether it is in respect of long staple cotton or short staple cotton also?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: That is true. As given in the statement this year's forecast of the crop estimate is low and that is why we are trying to see that more is imported. It is not at all in the sphere of long staple cotton, because that is not grown in India. It is all below 1 and 1½.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: May I know whether it is a fact that some time back there was some offer from Egypt as well as from Sudan for the supply of long staple cotton at a cheap and concessional rate and whether that opportunity was availed of?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: No such offer was made. It is always available, because Egypt grows far more cotton than it can consume but we have to look at our own foreign exchange position when we think of importing.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: What are the reasons for scarcity conditions prevailing in the country now?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: Failure of crop as mentioned in the statement.

SHRIMATI SAVITRY DEVI NIGAM: May I know if this estimate of low production has brought about any effect on the price?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: Obviously, there has been high pressure selling and, therefore, the Forward Market Commission has imposed heavy margins and several other controls.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: Is it a fact that some millowners have contended that because of this reduction in import quota for cotton scarcity conditions are prevailing in the country?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: Quotas have been on the contrary liberalised. As against 600,000 bales in the normal year, we are contemplating to import this year about 7·5 lakhs bales.

†SETTING UP OF A SODA ASH MANUFACTURING PLANT AT SAMBHAR, RAJASTHAN

*384. **SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA:** Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any decision has been taken by Government to set up a soda ash manufacturing plant at Sambhar in Rajasthan; and

(b) if so, whether the plant will be in the private sector or in the public sector?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH): (a) and (b). A scheme has been submitted by a party for the establishment of a plant at Sambhar to manufacture soda ash etc. and it is under examination.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know whether it is a fact that proposals were made to set up a factory in the public sector?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: No, Sir.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know the estimated cost of the plant which is to be set up at Sambhar?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: About Rs. 4 crores.

†Postponed from the 9th December, 1959.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know whether it is a fact that the Hindustan Salt Co. made no provision for exploring the possibility of setting up a factory?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: No, Sir. That is not the point because the Hindustan Salt Co. just now is primarily concerned with developing more and more production of salt. As far as the alkali industry is concerned, there are many private parties coming forward and we are making the country nearly self-sufficient. Therefore, it was not thought necessary for a public sector company to go into this line at present.

†SIR NORMAN KIPPING'S VISIT TO INDIA

*385. **SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA:** Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Sir Norman Kipping, a senior member of the British Federation of Industries, visited India in November, 1959 to assess the needs of the Third Five Year Plan; and

(b) whether he has submitted any report or made any suggestions to the Planning Commission?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF PLANNING (SHRI S. N. MISHRA): (a) It is understood that the objects of the recent visit of Sir Norman Kipping were to discuss general problems affecting Indo-British trade and the kind of assistance which private industry in U.K. might be able to offer towards India's Third Five Year Plan and to visit the site of the Delhi College of Engineering and Technology, for which the members of the Federation of British Industries are to supply equipment worth £250,000.

(b) No, Sir.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know whether any tangible decisions

†Postponed from the 9th December, 1959.

have been taken for furthering Indo-British industrial collaboration as a result of his visit?

SHRI S. N. MISHRA: I do not know what happened during the course of his talk with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry—with the Minister of Commerce and Industry and other senior officials, but so far as we are concerned, we have not got any information about that.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know if he has submitted any Report to the Planning Commission?

SHRI S. N. MISHRA: There seems to be some kind of misconception about the nature of his visit. His visit was not officially sponsored and he has not made any report or suggestion to the Planning Commission.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know whether there was any exchange of views regarding the assessment of India's needs for the Third Five Year Plan as far industries are concerned?

SHRI S. N. MISHRA: Again, Sir, about any matter relating to industry, probably the Minister of Industry would be in a better position to say. So far as we are concerned, we only know that Sir Norman Kipping paid a courtesy call on our Deputy Chairman and he also met the Prime Minister. Besides that, we are not in possession of any other information.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: The Deputy Minister just now said that he did not know about the talks he had had with the Minister of Commerce and Industry. Now that the Minister of Industry is here and may I know whether he could enlighten the House about the talks?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: We had considerable discussion with Sir Norman Kipping. As a result of his visit, perhaps the Report which is to be submitted under the Colombo Plan for the two projects of Sir Eric Coates's Mission might be expedited. There were other discussions also.