

(b) United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Burma, China, Thailand and Egypt are some of the more important countries, to which shipments of Indian jute goods have shown a downward trend in recent months.

(c) The export duty on sacking has been reduced. A delegation of the industry has already visited certain consuming countries and some other similar proposals are under contemplation.

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY: Are there any countries, other than the countries mentioned in (b), which are importing packing material.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Of course there are other countries, like South Africa, which import packing material, but I mentioned the important ones. They are the important consumers.

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY: May I know why the demand for packing material has fallen?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Our information shows that when we removed, early in 1952, the destination quota restrictions for jute exports, some of the countries took large quantities at relatively high prices, and they are naturally anxious to dispose of their stocks before going in for further imports.

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY: Is it a fact that most of those markets have found substitutes for jute packing material, and that that is the reason why imports have fallen in those countries?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: No. That was the old reason. Some of the countries were trying to evolve substitutes for jute. But since jute prices are going down, substitute packing materials have grown less popular.

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY: What steps do Government intend to take to see that the demand for Indian jute does not sag?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: We have already reduced the export duty, as my hon. friend knows, from Rs. 175 to Rs. 80 per ton with effect from the 7th February, and we are exploring other methods.

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY: Have the Indian Jute Manufacturers Association suggested to the Government some steps for improving the market position?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Yes, Sir. They are interested, and they have along been suggesting steps, and we are carefully considering them.

*280. [The questioner Shri H. D. Rajah] was absent.]

EXPORT OF SOAP

*281. SHRI E. K. IMBICHIBAVA: Will the Minister for COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of soap (washing as well as toilet) exported from India during the years 1950, 1951 and 1952 and up to the end of February 1953; and

(b) the quantity of exports during the above periods of the soap manufactured by (i) the Mysore Government Soap Factory; (ii) the Kerala Soap Factory; and (iii) Messrs. Lever Brothers?

THE MINISTER FOR COMMERCE
(SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR):

(a) 1950	.. 23,019 cwts.
1951	.. 39,547 cwts.
1952	.. 54,878 cwts.
1953	.. 1,296 cwts.
(January).	

Figures for the month of February 1953 are not yet available.

(b) Official statistics do not give names of exporters and manufacturers and the information is, therefore, not available.

SHRI K. C. GEORGE: Is the Government at least in a position to say

which out of the three products mentioned—Mysore, Kerala and Lever Brothers—is most exported?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I can give the figures of their installed capacity of production: Government Soap Factory, Mysore—750 tons installed capacity; Kerala Soap Factory, 750 tons; and Lever Brothers, Bombay and Calcutta together,—49,130 tons. Presumably, Lever Brothers must be the largest exporters. But that is only a presumption.

SHRI K. C. GEORGE: Is the Government aware that the Kerala factory has almost closed down for want of facilities to export their product?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Our information is otherwise. The hon. Member said “almost closed down”. It has not closed down.

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY: Will the hon. Minister give us the information as soon as possible, if he can, as to what percentage of this export of soap was from foreign firms operating in India, like Lever Brothers?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: It would be difficult to collect that information, because we normally issue destination licences and we do not keep a record of different types of soap manufactured by different factories. The labour involved in it would be much larger than justified, because as my hon. friend obviously knows, we shall have to have information regarding the particular types of soap exported by each exporter, and he is never definite about what he is going to export.

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY: Does not the hon. Minister think that the information asked for would be useful?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I do not think, with very great respect, that it would serve any useful purpose.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is a matter of opinion.

CLOSURE OF GENERAL MOTORS ASSEMBLY PLANT

*282. DR. J. P. SRIVASTAVA: Will the Minister for COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the General Motors Assembly Plant in Bombay is going to be closed down; if so, why;

(b) what will be the effect of such closing down on the supply of cars in India; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to find alternative employment for the large number of skilled workmen and other trained staff who would be thrown out of employment?

THE MINISTER FOR COMMERCE (SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR): (a) No, Sir, so far as the Government are aware.

(b) No licences have been issued to General Motors for the import of cars since July 1952, such issues of licences being restricted to concerns who have a manufacturing programme. Government do not consider that the supply position of cars would materially deteriorate by reason of the non-issue of licences to General Motors. The whole question will, however, be reviewed after the receipt of the report from the Tariff Commission on the Automobile Industry.

(c) Does not arise.

Under (b), I should add that we are expecting the report by the end of March.

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY: Is the hon. Minister sure that he is answering (b)? (b) asks what the effect will be of such closing down on the supply of cars in India; it does not ask about the licence to General Motors.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is no closing down. Therefore, the question does not arise.

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY: He is saying something about licences.