

COUNCIL OF STATES

Tuesday, 27th May 1952

The Council met at a quarter past eight of the clock, MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**RAW SILK INDUSTRY**

*1. SHRI KRISHNA MOORTHY RAO : Will the Minister for COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that the raw silk industry in India particularly in Mysore is a cottage industry;

(b) whether it is a fact that millions of people are dependent upon it for their livelihood ;

(c) whether it is a fact that the only spun-silk factory in India in Kankana-halli in Mysore has stopped work on account of large accumulation of stocks; and

(d) what action Government have taken to protect the Indian silk industry ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A large number of people are engaged in the raw silk industry but Government have no information about the actual number.

(c) The only spun-silk mill in India is at Channapatna in Mysore. The working of this mill has been reduced partially as a temporary measure. The Government understand that normal work will be resumed as soon as the present accumulated stocks of spun-silk yarn are cleared by the mills.

(d) The sericulture industry in India is a protected industry. Such protection is reviewed from time to time by the Tariff Commission and 9CSD

recommendations made to the Government with a view to safeguarding the interests of the industry. The Indian Tariff Board (now Tariff Commission) had submitted its last report only recently and most of the recommendations made by the Board have been accepted by the Government.

SHRI KRISHNA MOORTHY RAO:

Has the Government made any investigation into the cause of the slump ?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR : I presume that the hon. Member means the reduction in prices of raw silk in the country. Firstly, on account of the Japanese silk prices going down, there was also a consequent reduction in the inland price of raw silk. Secondly, the recent recession of prices in February also is likely to have an adverse effect on the prices of raw silk in India.

SHRI KRISHNA MOORTHY RAO : Is it a fact that a large quantity of raw silk is being imported into India?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR : No, I am afraid I cannot agree with my hon. friend. Actually the requirements of raw silk as assessed by the Indian Tariff Board were 4 million lbs. Our production last year was 2³ million lbs. There was thus a gap of about 2 million lbs. to be filled. In 1950, our imports were actually 7 lakhs lbs., and in 1951 our imports were 12 lakhs odd lbs. So, there is no case of over-imports in this commodity.

SHRI KRISHNA MOORTHY RAO: What steps do Government propose to take to help this cottage industry ?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR : We have been very anxious to see to it that the raw silk growers are not affected by a reduction in price, but at the same time we have to consider the case of the weavers also and also the normal consumer. Therefore, the Government-recently submitted the question to the Tariff Board, and in accordance

with their recommendation we have fixed the import duty at 30 per cent. *plus* Rs. 3-14-0 per lb. We are keeping a close watch on the prices, and at the present moment, comparing world prices, we consider that if the production is adequate and if there is any further change, we shall again have the advantage of the Tariff Commission's recommendations.

SHRI M. VALIULLA : What is the time intervening between the recommendation of the Tariff Board and its implementation ?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR : The original recommendation of the Tariff Board was the result of a reference to it in 1948. In March 1951 there was a reduction in import duty, also on the recommendation of the Tariff Board. It was in October 1951, that we at the instance of the growers referred the question to the Tariff Commission, and we acted in accordance with the recommendation of the Commission.

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY : Has the Government assessed the silk needs of the country ?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR : There can be only a rough assessment in this matter, and we go by the assessment of the Tariff Board that the requirement of raw silk in this country is round about 4 million lbs. But there are varying opinions, one opinion holding that it is 5 million lbs., and another opinion holding that it is a little less than 4 million lbs. But, as I said, we go by the figure assessed by the Tariff Board—4 million lbs.

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY : May I know what percentage production makes to consumption ?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR : I am afraid that I can only repeat that our production last year was 2*3 million lbs.

" SHRI GOVINDA REDDY : Is there a Silk Board to consider details of this nature ?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Yes, Sir. In 1948 Government appointed what is known as the Indian Silk Board. It meets annually, and its standing committee oftener. We did consider the recommendations of the Silk Board.

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY : Has the Silk Board recommended that imports of silk from outside should be regulated ?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Yes, Sir. With a little variation, my hon. friend is correct. The recommendation was that all the imports of raw silk may be pooled together. There were practical difficulties in working out that scheme, and, therefore, Government have adopted a modified scheme which comes to this, that we go by the recommendations of the particular States concerned in respect of allotment of raw silk. But imports allotted to the actual users and the imports-allotted to the importers have been, very much reduced partially as a result of the recommendation of the Silk Board.

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY: In view of this being a protected industry and still needing protection, is it not desirable that imports should be strictly regulated in accordance with the production ?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Imports of any commodity are, so far as it is possible for Government, strictly regulated with a view to filling the gap between the indigenous production and the requirements. In the matter of silk also, we have been strictly adopting that policy. But Government cannot go further and artificially raise the price of indigenous silk..

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY : Is it not a fact that the present slump is due to unregulated imports permitted by the Government ?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR : No; I am afraid Government do not agree with that view-

SHRI H. D. RAJAH : What steps have the Government taken to make this industry self-sufficient in this country ?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR : There are various steps which have been suggested by the Silk Board. The Mysore Government and the other State Governments like Kashmir and West Bengal have been taking steps for fostering the industry, and the Government have been off and on helping with financial grants.

SHRI K. C. GEORGE : Are the Government aware that there are certain factories there where small children on a large scale are employed and the Factories Act is not applied ?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR : If my hon. friend gives notice of a separate question, I shall find out how many children are in the factory.

श्री जे० आर० कपूर (उत्तर प्रदेश) : क्या उममत्री जो यह बतलाने की कृपा करेंगे कि काटेज इन्डस्ट्री बोर्ड का ध्यान इस ओर गया है ? अगरे हूं, तो इस ओर क्या कदम उठाये गये हैं ?

[SHRI J. R. KAPOOR: Will the Deputy Minister be pleased to state whether the attention of the Cottage Industries Board has been drawn to it? If so, what steps have been taken in this direction ? J

श्री डी० पी० करमारकर : काटेज इन्डस्ट्री बोर्ड की पौलिसी जिस तरह दूसरे कोमीडटी के बारे में है, वही इसके लिए है दूसरी व्यवस्था नहीं है। काटेज इन्डस्ट्री बोर्ड ने यह काम सिल्क बोर्ड को सौंप दिया है इसलिये काटेज इन्डस्ट्री बोर्ड इस काम को नहीं देख रही है। जबकि इसके लिये एक अलग बोर्ड इस काम को देखने के लिय है, इसलिये यह सिर्फ काम बांटने का सवाल है।

[SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR : The policy of the Cottage Industries Board

in respect of this industries is the same as it is in the case of other industries and their is no different arrangement. The Cottage Industries Board has entrusted the work to the Silk Board; hence the former does not look to it. When a separate Board is in existence for looking into this work, the only question is that of distribution of work.]

श्री जे० आर० कपूर : इन दोनों संस्थाओं में इस व्यापार की उन्नति के लिये आपसी सहयोग होने की व्यवस्था है ?

[SHRI J. R. KAPOOR : Is there any possibility of mutual co-operation between these two organisations for the progress of this trade?]

DIVISIONAL OFFICE FOR RAILWAYS

*2. SHRI R. BISWASROY : Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a divisional office for the railways is proposed to be established in Orissa ;

(b) if the answer is in the negative, the reasons therefor ;

(c) whether it is a fact that the District Traffic Office now at Khurdha Road is being abolished under the new scheme of regrouping; and

(d) if the answer is in the affirmative, the reasons for such a step ?

THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (SHRI N. GOPALASWAMI) : Ca) No.

(b) No new divisional office is being opened. A Regional Office is being opened for the ex-B.N.R. at Bilaspur which is from the organisational and operational points of view far superior to any place in Orissa.

(c) No.

(d) Question does not arise.

SHRI B. RATH : What are the conditions required to decide where a divisional office should be set up ?