

The Agreement will be finally signed by the Soviet Minister of Foreign Trade Mr. Patolichev who will arrive in India early next month at our invitation.

SHRIMATI LALITHA (RAJAGOPALAN): May I know from the hon. Minister whether this discussion has led to any further fresh agreement for the export of items other than those that we have been exporting to Russia? If so, what are they?

SHRI S. V. RAMASWAMY: Now, the emphasis hereafter will be not on the traditional items but on new items like engineering goods, etc. That is the purpose with which this has been done. Unless we go in for engineering and non-traditional items we cannot expand trade.

IMPORT OF TABLE TENNIS BALLS

*409. { SHRIMATI TARA RAMCHANDRA SATHE:†
SHRIMATI LALITHA
(RAJAGOPALAN):

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have banned importing Halex and Villa table tennis balls from other countries;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to give permits to the Montana Company to import raw-material for the production of these balls; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Montana table tennis balls are not available in the open market at fair price?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI (S. V. RAMASWAMY): (a) The import of table tennis balls of any brand is totally banned.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati Tara Rama Chandra Sathe.

(b) Yes, Madam, subject to availability of foreign exchange, the Ministry of Industry may allot foreign exchange to them on A.U. basis.

(c) No complaint to this effect has been brought to the notice of the Government. But if there is any, I may request the Hon'ble Member to inform the Ministry of Industry who take suitable steps in all such cases.

SHRIMATI TARA RAMCHANDRA SATHE: Madam, is it a fact that the Government of India had banned the import of Halex and Villa table tennis balls and gave an import licence to the Montana Company? This Montana Company has raised the price from thirty paise to Rs. 1/50 each. May I know whether the Government had laid down any condition when the import licence was given to this company?

SHRI S. V. RAMASWAMY: The import licence relates only to the import of materials for which we have given, for the period April 1962 to March 1963, a licence worth nearly twenty-three thousand rupees. For 1963-64 the value of the licence was eighteen thousand rupees and for 1964-65 the value was sixteen thousand rupees. The installed capacity of the Montana Company is for the production of 1.5 million balls but the production is only of the order of 1.25 million balls. We have no idea as regards the price.

SHRIMATI TARA RAMCHANDRA SATHE: He did not reply to the question whether any condition was laid down. The second question I want to ask is this. Is it a fact that the Government authorised some persons to investigate about the rise in the price of Montana balls, and as the news leaked out before the investigators reached Bombay, this

Montana Company introduced in the market Tinta-Montana Special ball for 50 paise each? And may I know whether the investigators enquired about the Montana balls and whether they approached the table tennis players and table tennis clubs or table tennis associations?

SHRI S. V. RAMASWAMY: So far as this Ministry is concerned, it only licenses the import of certain things. What they manufacture and at what price they market the product, it is for the other Ministry to answer.

SHRI T. N. SINGH: I will enquire into the complaint made by the hon. Member.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know from the hon. Deputy Minister for Commerce whether he made any enquiries from the sister industries Ministry after the receipt of this question and if so with what result?

SHRI S. V. RAMASWAMY: No such enquiry was made with the other Ministry.

*310. [Transferred to the 30th November, 1965.]

EXPORT OF JUTE GOODS

*311. { SHRI P. ABRAHAM;
SHRI U. S. DUGAL:†

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to increase the export of Jute goods from India; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to achieve this object?

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri U. S. Dugal.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI S. V. RAMASWAMY): (a) and (b) Government's objective is to continuously increase export of jute goods. A statement showing the steps taken in this behalf is laid on the Table of the House. From Rs. 140 crores worth export of jute goods in 1960-61, the export of jute goods are running at the rate of Rs. 180 crores per year in 1965-66.

STATEMENT

The following steps have been taken to expand the export of jute goods:

(a) Continuous efforts are being made to increase the production of raw jute and improve the quality of raw jute by adopting improved methods of cultivation;

(b) A vigorous research programme to find out new and diverse uses for jute goods is being formulated to provide greater outlet for jute;

(c) Indian Jute Mills Association is currently undertaking a research programme in the U.S.A. in collaboration with a firm of industrial consultants (Fabrics Research Laboratories) with the main object of developing new use of jute goods. The work is progressing satisfactorily.

(d) A committee for Voluntary Registration of jute goods export contracts has been functioning under the Chairmanship of the Jute Commissioner since January, 1963.

(e) Compulsory Pre-shipment Inspection and Quality Control under the Export (Quality Control and Inspection) Act, 1963 have been introduced with effect from 1st January, 1965.

(f) With the introduction of Tax Credit Scheme exporters of jute goods will now qualify for tax credit certi-