

RAJYA SABHA

Friday, the 3rd May, 2002/13 Vaisakha, 1924 (saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock,

MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

*541. [The Questioner (Shri B.P. Singhal) was absent. For answer vide Page 25 infra.]

Indo-Chinese Alliance for Chemical Fibres

*542. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD :†
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether China is looking for technological alliances with Indian Corporates in the areas of Chemical Fibres;

(b) if so, whether the prospects of collaboration between the two countries are very good;

(c) whether the President, China Chemical Fibres Association has pointed out that there is a potential for information regarding markets between the two countries;

(d) if so, whether any agreement in this regard has been reached between India and china for alliance in chemical technology;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the steps being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SUKHDÉV SINGH DHINDSA) : (a) to (f) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad.

Statement

There has been no formal proposal from Chinese side for technological alliances in chemical fibres.

A delegation led by the President of the China Chemical fibres Association attended the 4th International Conference organized by the Asian Chemical Fibre Industries Federation in Mumbai on 22nd and 23rd March, 2002. The President of the China Chemical Fibres Association mentioned in his address that there is scope for exchange of views on topics of mutual interest including exchange of information and cooperation among the Asian, European and American Chemical fibre Industries.

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD : Sir, according to the hon. Minister, there has not been any proposal from the Chinese side for technological alliances between India and China in so far as chemical fibre is concerned. Also, according to the reply given by the hon. Minister, the President of the China Chemical Fibres Association while he was here in the month of March, 2002, had mentioned that there is a lot of scope for exchange of views on topics of mutual interest, including exchange of information and cooperation among the Asian, European and American chemical fibre industries. I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether the Government of India is aware that China has become the net importer of chemical fibre and the same is the position of the USA and Europe. Is it not true that India has not been able to take advantage of the supply gap inspite of the fact that the country possesses the required technology, the requisite technology, and capability to produce chemical fibre. I would also like to know from the hon. Minister this. Is it not true that we have killed our chemical fibre companies ourselves, except one or two most favoured ones? therefore, my question to the hon. Minister would be, what steps shall the Government of India take to take advantage of the huge demand-supply gap in China in chemical fibre and ensure a win-win situation for both the countries by achieving agreements and cooperation in this field and also build requisite companies with capacities within the country?

श्री सुखदेव सिंह ढिंडसा: सभापति जी, जैसाकि मैंने अपने जवाब में कहा है कि मई में एशियन केमिकल फाइबर इंडस्ट्रीज एसोसिएशन की कांफ्रेंस हुई थी। इसमें सब एशियन कंट्रीज के साथ डिस्कस किया गया था कि कैसे ये एक-दूसरे के साथ मिल सकते हैं, कैसे एक-दूसरे की मदद कर सकते हैं ? इसमें चाइना की एसोसिएशन के प्रेजीडेंट ने मेशन किया

था कि चाइना और इंडिया में स्कोप हो सकता है। मैं भी लास्ट डे इसमें गया था। चाय के वक्त उन्होंने मेरे साथ कुछ डिस्कस किया था। मैंने भी कहा था अगर हमारी इंडस्ट्री को, एसोसिएशन को और चाइना प्रेसीडेंट को कि अगर ऐसा कोई फायदा हो सकता है तो वी आर रेडी। लेकिन उन्होंने अभी तक कोई प्रपोजल नहीं भेजा, न तो राइटिंग में और न ही हमारी जो इंडिया की एसोसिएशन है वहां से कोई ऐसा प्रपोजल आया है। अगर ऐसा कोई प्रपोजल आएगा तो गवर्नमेंट उस पर अच्छी तरह से विचार करके उसकी मदद करेगी।

श्री गुलाम नबी आजाद: सर, यह तो खाली उनकी तरफ से है। जैसा कि मैंने अर्ज किया था अपने सवाल में कि गैप बहुत है। दूसरी यूरोपीयन कंट्रीज अगर फायदा उठा रही हैं तो हम क्यों नहीं उठाते हैं। क्या इसमें भी कोई इनिशिएटिव लिया जा सकता है? एक तो यह बात पूछना चाहता हूं। दूसरी तरफ मैं पूछना चाहता हूं माननीय मंत्री जी से कि कोई मैक्रो लेवल पर रीअसेसमेंट हो सकती है इस कैमिकल फाइबर इंडस्ट्री में जिसके द्वारा जो इस इंडस्ट्री में इम्पोर्ट आफ कैपिटल गुड्स, टैक्सेशन आफ इंडस्ट्रीज और फंडिंग थ्रू बैंक्स एण्ड फाइनेंशियल इंस्टीट्यूशंस हैं वह हो सके ताकि इसको ज़्यादा मदद मिले?

श्री सुखदेव सिंह ढिंडसा: बिल्कुल हो सकती हैं वैसे तो हमारी कंट्री इसमें सेल्फ सफिशियंट है लेकिन मैंने उस दिन भी जो इंडिया की एसोसिएशन है, उनको यही कहा था कि गवर्नमेंट आपकी क्या मदद कर सकती है इस बारे में हमारे पास प्रोपोजल लाइए कि उसके लिए हम क्या कर सकते हैं, फाइनेंस मिनिस्ट्री क्या कर सकती है, मेरा डिपार्टमेंट क्या कर सकता है। आप अगर मेरे पास लेकर आएंगे तो उस पर जरूर विचार करेंगे। वे अभी आए नहीं हैं, मेरे ख्याल से शायद वे तैयार कर रहे होंगे। Definitely, we will do it.

श्री गुलाम नबी आजाद: इधर से कोई इनिशिएटिव ले रहे हैं?

श्री सुखदेव सिंह ढिंडसा: इधर से ही है। उन्होंने कहा कि वे नहीं करते तो आप शुरू कीजिए। तो हम उनके साथ हैं।

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDI: Sir, I am not satisfied with the reply of the hon. Minister. The question is, whether there is any prospect of collaboration between the two countries regarding the chemical fibres. The reply is: "There has been no such proposal." Sir, there is a lot of difference between a prospect and a proposal. Prospect means, you must make an effort and see to it that its successful. On 23rd March, the President of the China Chemical Fibres Association had said that they have been producing 8.2 million tonnes of fibres in China. Still, they are importing 1.4 million tonnes of fibres. They openly praised India for production of high quality material, with lesser cost

of production. Simply by saying, "We have just sent a proposal, but, no reply has been received and we are waiting for the reply," is not correct. The people of India will be happy if the Government succeeds in exporting more commodities. A clearcut case is there. How is the Government saying that they have sent a proposal and they are waiting for the reply? Is it not the duty of the Government to make all out efforts to take advantage of the situation? The Government may depute some officers for this purpose, or, the personnel in both the Embassies may sit together to work out the details. The Government must make an earnest effort to take full advantage of this opportunity, to fill the gap of 1.4 million tonnes of export, which China is having right now. Therefore, I would like to know from the Minister whether he is prepared to assure the House that 'yes', the Government of India will take all necessary steps within a few months to achieve the target in this direction. Both the countries, India as well as China, should extend the necessary cooperation to each other in this direction, and India should try to achieve the goal by exporting the surplus material to China.

श्री सुखदेव सिंह ढिंडसा: सर, मैंने पहले भी कहा है कि हमारी तरफ से कोई कमी नहीं आएगी। मेरी एसोसिएशन के साथ भी बात चल रही है और जो प्रोपोजल आएंगे, जो हम कर सकते हैं, करेंगे। उनको यह कहा गया है कि सरकार की तरफ से आपका भी करेंगे, जो हम स्टेप ले सकते हैं वे भी लेंगे।

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDI: Sir, I am sorry to say that simply sending an association is not enough. The Chinese Government is there. The Indian Government is there. The policy is there. The Embassies of both the countries are there. They must make an effort to discuss it at the diplomatic level. The Chinese Association is a private organisation. It is just an autonomous organisation. It won't serve the purpose. My categorical question is, whether the Minister will assure this August House that he is going to make an effort on Government to Government basis, and will definitely utilise this opportunity to achieve the goal.

SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA: I will try to do it.

SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM: Sir, I want to know from the hon. Minister whether there was any study made by the concerned Ministry about the Chinese technology in chemical fibres, and whether sufficient safeguards taken with regard to environmental protection to dispose of the waste chemical

fibres. Before entering into this agreement, there must be a thorough study, because we had the experience of the Bhopal Gas Tragedy, and whether such a study has been made and necessary measures taken in this regard.

श्री सुखदेव सिंह ढिंडसा: सर, अभी तो कोई प्रोपोज़ल ही नहीं है। जब कोई प्रोपोज़ल आएगा तो सारी स्टडी करेंगे और उसके बाद ही उसकी इजाजत मिलेगी।

SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Sir, I am on a broader question. When we deal with China in regard to chemical products and chemical fertilizers, in general, I would like to know whether we have undertaken any analysis. In today's global economy, we have to have an analysis *vis-a-vis* each country, what are our strengths; what are our weaknesses; what are the opportunities before us; and what are the threats before us in regard to each country, I would like to know whether any industry-specific study of China's strength *vis-a-vis* our strength, weakness, etc., has been undertaken and whether those opportunities have been presented to the Indian industry and manufacturers.

श्री सुखदेव सिंह ढिंडसा: सर, यह तो हमेशा सरकार का चलता ही रहता है हम स्टडी भी करते हैं और एक-दूसरे को कोआपरेट भी करते हैं, उसको देखते भी हैं कि क्या उसका हमें कोई नुकसान या फायदा हो सकता है। इसलिए वह तो एक ऑन। गोइंग प्रोसेस है।

Mumbai-Ahmedabad Fast Train

*543. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the MINISTER of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:—

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering to introduce a train between Mumbai and Ahmedabad with the speed of 400 kilometres per hour;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken any steps in this regard, so far; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

श्रीमती सविता शारदा: मंत्री महोदय मेरे पास एक समाचार-पत्र की कटिंग है जिसमें आपके मंत्री महोदय दिग्विजय सिंह जी ने कहा था कि मुंबई-अहमदाबाद तथा दिल्ली-लखनऊ