

**ANGLAIS****IS GLOBALISATION KILLING INDIA'S COTTON FARMERS ?**

Only one in 12 of India's farmers has ever heard of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The mostly illiterate cotton farmers of Vidarbha – the north-eastern corner of Maharashtra, where Wardha is located – surely count among the other 11. But even the most exalted of trade officials has heard of them. In the past 18 months more than 1,200 farmers in this, the cotton bowl of India, have taken their own lives to escape debts to money lenders.

These men have become the most poignant example of India's "agrarian crisis". This was widely blamed for the previous government's defeat in the 2004 election and overshadows India's timorous position in the Doha round of global trade talks, where it heads a group of more than 40 poor countries that want to shelter their farmers from foreign competition. Last year Oxfam, a charity, published a study arguing that the farmers' plight was worsened by their "indiscriminate and forced integration" into an "unfair global system".

The Vidarbha suicides have many causes, most of them homegrown, says M.S Swaminathan, the father of India's green revolution. The farmers borrowed money at punitive rates, so they could sink wells and buy costly "biotech" cotton-seeds. But diesel for the pumps leapt in price, and the seeds proved ill-suited to small plots, fed mostly by rain. If the crops fail, "a man loses hope", Mr Swaminathan says "He has the money-lender waiting at the door every day and taunting him".

None of this is globalisation's fault. But farmers have also been hurt by the low world price of their crop, which has fallen by more than a third since 1994. Last season the state government cut the guaranteed price it paid for cotton from about 2,000 rupees (\$56) per 100 kg to 1750.

Prices are low partly because cotton is so heavily subsidized by rich countries, principally America. The Doha round aims to cut these handouts "ambitiously" and "expeditiously". If they were cut completely, it might add about 13 % to world prices, according to one recent estimate by two World Bank economists. But the Doha round is unlikely to be so slick. A more likely scenario, in which cotton subsidies are cut by a third (and export subsidies eliminated), would add less than 5 % to the price.

In the meantime, India's government could impose a "countervailing" tariff on dumped cotton. But cheap fibres please its textile industry, which is keen to take advantage of the end in 2005 of the old global quota regime. India's cotton tariff is just 10 %, much lower than its tariffs on other commodities such as sugar. And exporters of yarn and cloth don't even pay that. Cheap cotton keeps the textile mills humming: were subsidies to be removed, India would lose out overall by the equivalent of about \$ 84 m, according to the World Bank economists.

In the abstract, the answer to the farmers' distress seems easy : move from growing cotton to weaving it in factories. But India's onerous labour laws inhibit industrial employment, and the lack of a safety net leaves farmers clinging to their marginal patches of land.

There is a deep historical irony in all this. India's long-fibre cotton was introduced by the British in the 19th century to feed the Lancashire cotton mills. Their cheap cloth put India's own weavers out of business artisans were "thrown back on the soil"; Today India's textile-makers are enjoying a renaissance. If only more of its farmers could escape the soil.

Epreuve du 1^{er} groupe

I. COMPREHENSION (10 points)

A. 1. The central idea in the text is : (01,5 point)

- a) The Indians and the W.T.O
- b) The british colonization in India.
- c) Indian crisis in agriculture
- d) Indian cotton growers in difficulties.

B. Complete these sentences using information from the text : (0,5 point)

- 2. The loss of the election in 2004 was due to.....
- 3. Apart from cotton, Indian farmers grow.....
- 4. In the Doha meeting on trade, India and some developing countries.....
.....
- 5. Cotton prices are low in the international market because of.....
.....

C. Find in the text words which are similar in meaning as these words or group of words (0,5 point / R)

- 6. Goods (paragraph 6)
- 7. Money given freely by a government to support a sector (paragraph 5).
- 8. Causing hardship. (paragraph 3)
- 9. A meeting (paragraph 5)

D. What do these figures and dates represent in the text ? (0,5 point / R)

- 10. 5 %.....
- 11. \$ 56.....
- 12. 2004.....
- 13. 13 %.....
- 14. 1994.....

E. Fill in the chart adequately (0,5 point / R)

| FACTS | CONSEQUENCES |
|---|--|
| 15. farmers heavy rated loans | |
| 16. Money given to cotton growers in rich countries | |
| 17. | "It would have been possible to increase the prices by 13 % said some world Bank Economists. |
| 18. If subsidies were removed | |

Epreuve du 1^{er} groupe**II. LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE (06 points)****F. Rewrite the following sentences in keeping the same meaning (0,5 point / R)**

19. It is possible that the Indian authorities lower the cotton prices.

The Indian authorities.....

20. It is necessary for cotton growers to find other resources.

Cotton growers.....

21. Were subsidies to be removed, India would lose out overall by the equivalent of about \$ 84 m.

If.....

22. A counter railing tariff on dumped cotton could be imposed by the Indian government.

The Indian government.....

G. Use the correct relative pronouns (0,5 point / R)

23. Ten rounds on cotton trade were held, 5 of.....in India

24. The day.....cotton growers will be well trained, the agricultural trends will start changing.

25. Doha was the place.....World trade matters were discussed.

26. Any country in.....cotton growers are not subsidized, cannot compete.

H. Find the right verb form or tense (0,5 point / R)

27. It's high time for Americans (to stop) subsidizing their peasants.

28. If the market prices got higher, farmers (to be) happier.

29. Our partners enjoy (to discuss) with us.

30. The President makes us (to sign) the treaty.

31. It's years since the cotton prices (to be lowered).

III. ESSAY Choose one topic and write about 150 words. (04 points)

1. Write an article on cotton difficulties in developing countries for a local newspaper.

2. As a secretary general of the W.T.O write a Memo to the governments of the developed countries on measures that you'd take to help developing countries producing cotton to better sell their products on the international market.

CORRECTION SHEET

I. COMPREHENSION

(10 points)

(01,5 point)

A. d

B. **(02 = 0,5 point x 04)**

- 2. indian's agrarian crisis / Indian crisis in agriculture
- 3. sugar
- 4. wanted to shelter their farmers from foreign competition.
- 5. They are so heavily subsidized by rich countries, such as America.

C. **Find in the text words which are similar in meaning as these words or group of words.**

(02 points = 0,5 point x 04)

- 6. commodities
- 7. subsidies
- 8. punitive
- 9. a round / talk

D. **(02,5 points = 0,5 point x 05)**

- 10. the minimum percentage that would be added to the cotton price if subsidies are cut by a third.
- 11. The equivalent of 2 000 rupees representing the price of cotton.
- 12. The defeat of the government in the elections.
- 13. The amount of money that might be added to the world prices if.....
- 14. Date of the cotton price fall.

E. **Chart filling**

(02 points = 0,5 point x 04)

| FACTS | CONSEQUENCES |
|---|--|
| 15. | They could sink wells and buy costly "biotech" cotton-seeds. |
| 16. | Makes the prices lower |
| 17. If the Doha round succeeded in cutting the handouts "ambitiously" and "expeditiously" | |
| 18. | India would lose out overall by the equivalent of about \$ 84 m. |

II. LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE

(06 points)

- A. 19. the Indian authorities may lower the cotton prices.
 20. Cotton growers need to find other resources.
 21. If subsidies were removed, India would.....
 22. The Indian government could impose a countervailing.....

B. **Relative Pronouns**

(0,5 x 04 = 02 points)

- 23. which
- 24. when
- 25. where
- 26. which

C. **Verb form or tense**

(0,5 x 05 = 02,5 points)

- 27. to stop
- 28. would be
- 29. discussing
- 30. sign
- 31. were

III. ESSAY

(04 points)

- Coherence
- language command
- good and relevant ideas.