

the readiness of the USSR to resume these talks.

### Asean Meeting

1655. SHRI AMAR PROSAD CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government are aware of the outcome of the meeting of the Association of South East Asia Nations held in January, 1979; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SAMARENDRA KUNDU): (a) Yes, Sir. A meeting of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers was held in Bangkok on January 12-13, 1979 to consider the current threat to peace and stability in the South East Asian region.

(b) The Foreign Ministers issued two statements on the situation in Kampuchea and the problem of refugees from Indo-China.

### Persons of Indian origin in Burma

1656. SHRI AMAR PROSAD CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about 2 lakh persons of Indian origin have been declared stateless in Burma; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and the action so far taken by the Government of India in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SAMARENDRA KUNDU): (a) and (b) A number of persons of Indian origin are residing in Burma, who are neither registered as Burmese nor Indian citizens

Many persons of Indian origin are *ipso facto* Burmese citizens under the

Constitution and Citizenship Laws of Burma, though in many cases they might not have acquired Burma Union Citizenship Certificates.

On a number of occasions, the question of status of persons of Indian origin has been discussed between the leaders of two countries and we have been assured that requests for Union Citizenship would be considered sympathetically.

### Mechanisation system in rural areas

1657. SHRI AMAR PROSAD CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the **mechanisation system has proved to be against the interests of rural labour**; and

(b) if so, what are the details in **this regard and what remedial steps** are being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI LARANG SAI): (a) and (b) Studies have been carried out by different institutions/research centres from time to time on the effect of mechanisation on Rural Labour. Some of these indicate that mechanisation is likely to increase unemployment; most of them, however reveal that it does not affect employment adversely. However, it is felt that the available studies are inadequate in certain respects. The Planning Commission has, therefore, set up a Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri B. Sivaraman on Farm Mechanisation to analyse afresh the combined effects of harvestors and tractors on employment, output and costs. The Ministry of Labour has set up in September, 1978 a Central Standing Committee on Rural Unorganised Labour to advise the Government *inter-alia* on the question of having a Central Legislation for safeguarding the interests of rural workers, particularly the agricultural workers, with regard to secu-