

RAJYA SABHA

Monday, the 15th November, 1976/the 24th
Kartika, 1898 (Saka).

The House met at eleven of the Clock. Mr.
Chairman in the Chair.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

Gujarat Rural Debtors' Relief Act, 1976

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI ANANT
PRASAD SHARMA): Sir, on behalf of Shri
Shahnawaz Khan, I beg to lay on the Table,
under subsection (3) of section 3 of the
Gujarat State Legislature (Delegation of
Powers) Act, 1976, a copy (in English and
Hindi) of the Gujarat Rural Debtors' Relief
Act, 1976 (No. 35 of 1976), enacted by the
President. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-
11545/76.]

I. Annual Report (year ended the 30th September, 1975) and Accounts of the Hindustan Salts Limited, Jaipur and related papers

n. Annual Report (ended the 30th September, 1975) and accounts of the Sambhar Salts Limited, Jaipur and related papers

SHRI ANANT PRASAD SHARMA: Sir, I
also beg to lay on the Table, under sub-
section (1) of section 619A of the Companies
Act, 1956, a copy each (in English and Hindi)
of the following papers: —

I. (i) Seventeenth Annual Report and
Accounts of the Hindustan Salts Limited,
Jaipur, for the year ended the 30th
September, 1975, together with the Auditors'
Report on the Accounts and the comments of
the 0 Comptroller and Auditor General of
India thereon.

(ii) Review by Government on the working
of the Company. [Placed in Library. See
No. LT-11546/76 for (i) and (ii).]
983 RS—1.

II. (i) Eleventh Annual Report and
Accounts of the Sambhar Salts Limited,
Jaipur, for the year ended the 30th
September, 1975, together with the
Auditors' Report on the Accounts and the
comments of the Comptroller and Auditor
General of India thereon.

(ii) Review by Government on the
working of the Company. [Placed in
Library. See No. LT-11547/76 for (i) and
(ii).]

I. Annual Report (1974-75) and Accounts of the Shipping Development Fund Committee and related papers

II. Annual Report (11th April, 1974 to 31st March, 1975) and Accounts of the Poompuhar Shipping Corporation Limited, Madras and related papers

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND
TRANSPORT (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI): Sir,
I beg to lay on the Table a copy each (in
English and Hindi) of the following
papers:—

I. (i) Sixteenth Annual Report and
Accounts of the Shipping Develop-
ment Fund Committee for the year
1974-75, and the Audit Report there-
on, under sub-section (6) of section
16 of the Merchant Shipping Act,
1958.

(ii) Statement giving reasons for the
delay in laying the Report mentioned at (i)
above. [Placed in Library. See No.
LT-11548/76 for (i) and (ii).]

II. (i) First Annual Report and
Accounts of the Poompuhar Shipping
Corporation Limited, Madras, for
the period from the 11th April, 1974
to the 31st March, 1975, together
with Auditors' Report on the Ac-
counts and the comments of the
Comptroller and Auditor General of
India thereon, under sub-section (3)
of section 619A of the Companies
Act, 1956, read with sub-clause (iv)
of clause (c) of the Proclamation

Bated the 31st January, 1976, issued by the President in relation to the State of Tamil Nadu.

(ii) Statement giving reasons for the delay in laying the Report mentioned at (i) above.
[Placed in Library. See No. LT-11549176 for (i) and (ii).]

LEAVE OF ABSENCE TO SHRI SURESH NARAIN MULLA

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have to inform i hat the following letter dated the 7th "ovember, 1976, has been received from Shri Suresh Narain Mulla: —

"In confirmation of the telegram already sent, this is to inform you that as I have been taken ill, and the doctors have advised me not to move out of the station, I will not be in a position to attend the 98th Session of the Rajya Sabha.

In the above circumstances, I request that the House may be pleased to condone my absence during this Session."

Is it the pleasure of the House that permission be granted to Shri Suresh Narain Mulla for remaining absent from all meetings of the House during he 98th Session of Rajya Sabha?

(No hon. Member dissented)

MR.. CHAIRMAN; Permission to remain absent is granted.

REFERENCE TO INCREASE IN EXPORT DUTY ON COFFEE

SHRI U. K. LAKSHMANA GOWDA (Karnataka): Sir, with your permission. I would like to raise a matter of grave concern which has arisen in the case of the coffee industry. Sir, a few days back. I sought your permission to raise this matter. At that time, the House was considering the Constitution (Forty-fourth Amendment) Bill. Therefore, permission was not granted. Now, I take this opportunity to raise

this matter. Last Saturday, that is, on the 6th of this month, the export duty on coffee was suddenly raised from Rs. 3,000 per tonne to Rs. 13,000 per tonne. In my view, this is a very crippling and savage duty to be levied at one stroke. As you know, in the case of the coffee industry, the majority of the coffee producers are small growers. Sir, you come from the Karnataka State and you knew the position very well. You have been the Chief Minister as well as the Finance Minister of Karnataka and you know the position. About 97 per cent of the holdings are below 25 acres. Now, the production from these holdings amounts to about 53 per cent. This duty which has been levied directly affects the producers and it is a very crippling one. Prices of coffee have gone up and the exports have also gone up. I have no objection if there is a graded increase in the export duty. This was done in February last by raising it from Rs. 50 to Rs. 300 a quintal, that is, Rs. 3,000 per tonne. From Rs. 3,000, this sudden jump to Rs. 13,000 is very crippling. I brought this to the notice of Mr. Subramaniam as well as Mr. Pranab Mukherjee. I would like the hon. leader of the House to convey the feelings to them so that some immediate relief could be given.

Sir, one more word. This levy has been made on the basis of the sales of the small quantity which was remaining from the crop of last year. Prices went up from Rs. 22,000 to Rs. 26,000 per tonne in the international market at this tail end of the season. Suddenly, Rs. 13,000 has been levied as export duty. But Sir, that new coffee crop comes into the market only in January. Normally, when the new crop comes into the market, prices come down both here and in the international market. If this levy is continued, the grower, I am afraid, will not be in a position to realise even the cost of production. This is borne out by the figures which have been submitted by the Coffee Board itself. The Coffee Board is not my organisation. It is directly run by an execu-