

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND YOUTH SERVICES (PROF. V. K. R. V. RAO) : A sum of Rupees one crore has been provided in the current year's budget for payment of grants to the National Committee for the Gandhi Centenary.

Provision of relief in drought affected areas is the responsibility of State Governments. The Government of India have, however, provided Rs. 50 crores *viz.*, Rs. 35 crores under loans and Rs. 15 crores under grants, in the budget for the current year for assistance to State Governments towards relief expenditure on account of various natural calamities like floods, drought, earthquake etc.]

#### INCREASE OF SHIPPING FREIGHT RATES

•379. SHRI YELLA REDDY : SHRI M. V. BHADRAM :

Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the U. S. Atlantic-India Conference Lines has unilaterally decided to raise the shipping freight rates on all cargoes by 12 per cent with effect from August next ;

(b) whether the same Conference Lines had raised the freight rates by 7 per cent last year ;

(c) whether such frequent rise in freight rates will adversely affect India's foreign trade ; and

(d) if so, what steps have been taken by Government against such arbitrary increase in freight rates ?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI K. RAGHURAMAIAH) : (a) The India-Pakhtan -Ceylon and Burma/U.S.A. Outward Freight Conference which handles India's imports from the Atlantic coast of U.S.A. had notified a general increase of 12% in freight rates to be effective from 1-8-1969.

(b) This Conference has effected an increase of 7% from January 1969.

(c) Shipping freight rate is only one of several factors which influence the foreign trade of the country. It is, therefore, difficult to isolate the effect of a single factor on the rise or fall in the trade.

[ ] English translation.

(d) Government is pressing all the Conferences operating in India's foreign trade to agree to prior consultation with shippers before imposing any general freight increases. In the present case, the Conference has, as a result of discussions with the representatives of the Government of India and the All India Shippers' Council, reduced the quantum of increase from 12% to 5% and has also put off the effective date from 1-8-1969 to 1-10-1969.

#### OFFICERS OF VISAKHAPATNAM PORT

♦380. SHRI M. V. BHADRAM : Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) the number of officers of the Visakhapatnam Port who are receiving remuneration from Rubi and Co. for doing ship-surveying work ;

(b) whether the said officers are allowing the said company to use the port launches, boats and other equipments for survey work without collecting any hire charges ; and

(c) whether there is a proposal to instruct the said officers to disassociate themselves from the said company ?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI K. RAGHURAMAIAH) : (a) Four.

(b) No, Madam. Port launches, boats and other equipment are not exclusively used for survey work- Orders have also been issued by the Port Trust that port launches and other survey materials should not be used for conducting surveys without recovery of hire charges.

(c) No, Madam. The work does not interfere with their normal duties and is undertaken during their spare time.

#### SHRI JAVA PRAKASH NARAYAN'S VIEWS ABOUT NAXALITES

♦381. SHRI M. SRINIVASA REDDY : SHRI Y. ADINARAYANA REDDY :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to a report published in the 'Times of India' dated June 9, 1969 (Delhi Edition) to the effect that Shri