

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (DR. KA-RAN SINGH): (a) and (b) No hangar at Palam Airport was struck by lightning on the 13th September 1967. A news agency report which appeared in a section of the press on the 14th September 1967 that an Indian Airlines Corporation hangar at Palam airport was struck by lightning and some aircraft were damaged, was incorrect. This news item was contradicted by the Corporation which issued a Press Release on the 14th September 1967. What had happened was only an electric short circuit which necessitated the mains being switched off till the short circuit was rectified. There was no damage to any aircraft or hangar.

#### PAKISTANI INFILTRATION INTO ASSAM

106. SHRI S. K. D. PALIWAL: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report of the Shillong correspondent of the English Weekly 'Current' published in the first two columns of page eight of its issue dated the 14th October, 1967 wherein it has been stated that Pakistan is sending infiltrators into Assam in a planned way; and

(b) if so, whether any effective steps have been taken by Government to check these infiltrators?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Vigilance has been stepped up and patrolling has been intensified. These and other measures taken by Government to secure the country's borders in the Eastern Region have had the desired result.

491. [Transferred to the 28th November, 1967.]

transferred from the 21st November, 1967.

#### CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

##### UNUSUAL FALL IN THE PRICE OF INDIGENOUS RUBBER

SHRI P. K. KUMARAN (Andhra Pradesh): May I call the attention of the Minister of COMMERCE to the unusual fall in the price of indigenous rubber, in spite of the fixation of price of rubber by the Government?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI): As honourable Members are aware, the Commerce Minister had made a statement in this House on the 18th August, 1967 announcing Government's decision accepting the fair price of Rs. 415 per 100 kgs. f.o.b. Cochin, recommended by the Tariff Commission for indigenous or/and rubber of RMA Grade I quality, the prices of other grades being fixed with corresponding adjustments. This decision was also notified in a Resolution published subsequently in the Gazette of India.

Following this announcement, the Government kept a close watch on the market behaviour of indigenous natural rubber and it was noticed that the market prices were falling steadily to levels far below the fair price announced. To safeguard the interests of the growers, therefore, Government decided on 20-10-1967 that the fair price of Rs. 415 per 100 kgs. of natural rubber should be notified as the statutory minimum price for RMA Grade I rubber with appropriate price differential for other grades, thus making transactions below the minimum illegal and punishable with imprisonment or fine or both. At the same time, the maximum price of RMA Grade I was fixed at Rs. 416 per 100 kgs.

In order to see that the demand for rubber also picks up, Government have suspended the issue of fresh licences and revalidation of old licences of/for import of rubber since April, 1967. As a result of these steps, Government expect that the demand for rubber will pick up in the next few weeks.

SHRI P. K. KUMARAN: Although new fresh licences are not being issued, the capacity of the existing licences is still there to make rubber available at

lower price so much so that natural rubber is not being sold at the prices fixed by the Government. If that is so, may I know, Sir, what action the Government propose to take?

Secondly, we have not made an estimate of the availability of reclaimed rubber which also is a factor responsible for pushing down the prices.

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI: Sir, the Government announced the minimum price of rubber at Rs. 415 per 100 kgs. because that was the recommendation of the Tariff Commission. What is actually happening now in Kerala is that there are private arrangements between the growers and certain manufacturers. Actually they are paying a lower price to them but on paper they show the entry as if it was sold at the minimum price announced by the Government. For this we become helpless. If there is an arrangement between the grower and the manufacturer to pay a lesser price and the grower accepts it while showing a higher price in the books, how can we interfere in such matters?

SHRI PALAT KUNHI KOYA (Kerala): Sir, since the growers in Kerala think that there is permit issued by the Government to import more of rubber, that is the reason why the purchasers are not coming forward to purchase these things at the rate fixed by the Government. Will the hon. Minister give an assurance that no import will be allowed during this year?

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI: We are not importing any rubber. As I have already stated, we have stopped all import for the last three months. The Rubber Board has recommended that we should not import any more rubber now.

SHRI C. D. PANDE (Uttar Pradesh): Mr. Chairman, Sir, may I draw your attention to my Calling Attention Notice? May I know, Sir, whether you have admitted it. I gave to the office a notice to raise a question regarding a certain item which appeared in the press about the Government of India handling publicity on behalf of the Russian Government here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I shall consider it.

SHRI P. K. KUMARAN: Will the Government consider restricting the im-

port of rubber from outside the country to 50 per cent, of the gap between the availability of indigenous rubber and the requirement of the country?

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI: Sir, I have taken very keen interest in this rubber matter. As soon as the prices of indigenous rubber went down, the matter was brought to the notice of the Commerce Ministry and immediately we ordered that the imports of rubber at that period should be staggered to a longer period because normally the practice of the manufacturers was that they may not lift the indigenous rubber because the imported rubber was available. So it is in order to see that the indigenous rubber prices also go up to within a certain limit that the minimum limit fixed by the Tariff Commission has been accepted by the Government. And it is to enable the off-take of indigenous rubber that we have banned the import of rubber. The Rubber Board also has taken a decision that we should not import rubber until the gap between the supply and demand is filled up at a later stage by imports when the indigenous stock is exhausted.

SHRI BALACHANDRA MENON (Kerala): In view of the fact that the manufacturers lower prices for rubber and the producers are supposed to sell at that lower price, will the Government take the initiative to form a corporation along with the growers so that they can be assured of a proper sale and price?

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI: I think my hon. friend has not understood me. I never said that the manufacturers insist and the growers are forced to accept a lower price. I said that it is by mutual arrangement between the two. I did not say that one is forced and the other is compelling the other person to sell at that lower rate. I said it is a private arrangement between the parties. We know that they sell it at a lower rate. But on paper they show that it has been sold at the minimum price fixed by the Government. What can we do?

SHRI BALACHANDRA MENON: The recent complaint is that they are not getting the minimum price and that they have to sell at a lower price. That is why I say they must have the capacity to bargain . . .

SHRI P. K. KUMARAN: Growers are not getting the money.

SHRI BALACHANDRA MENON: Yes. They must have the capacity to bargain. There should be a corporation, a firm and the private producers should take shares. Will the Government at least help them in forming such a corporation?

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI: As I have already stated, in order that the growers may get a remunerative price the Government has stopped all the imports. After all, the requirement of the industry has to be met from the indigenous rubber.

If the growers are in a position to demand whatever price has been fixed by the Government, naturally the manufacturers will be forced to pay that price. But if they agree to take a lesser price, Government cannot help.

MR. CHAIRMAN: His specific question was whether you are thinking of a corporation between the growers and others so that they may get a higher price.

SHRI BALACHANDRA MENON: Then they can bargain better.

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI: Sir, the position would improve within about 15 to 20 days and the Government is also keeping a very careful watch over the developments in this industry.

#### REFERENCE TO ALLEGED BOMBING OF THE SPEAKER'S HOUSE IN WEST BENGAL

SHRI NIREN GHOSH (West Bengal): Sir, today news has come that the house of the Speaker of the West Bengal Assembly has been bombed. We suspect the hand of Atulya Ghosh and Prafulla Sen in it. They want to murder the Speaker; they want to kill the Speaker.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, on a point of order. Names are being taken without any foundation. (*Interruption.*) It should be expunged. All kinds of wild allegations are made in this House.

(*Interruption.*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Niren Ghosh, you can send a note to me.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: I do suspect their hand in it. I repeat it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please sit down. Papers to be laid on the Table.

#### PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

##### ANNUAL ACCOUNTS (1965-66) OF THE KANDLA PORT TRUST AND AUDIT REPORT THEREON

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND SHIPPING (SHRI BHAKT DAR-SHAN): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table, under sub-section (2) of section 103 of the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963, the Annual Accounts of the Kandla Port Trust for the year 1965-66 and the Audit Report thereon. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-1754/67.]

##### ANNUAL REPORT (1966-67) OF THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, BOMBAY

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION (DR. TRIGUNA SEN): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Annual Report of the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, for the year 1966-67. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-1872/ 67.1]

#### MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS NOTIFICATIONS

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI K. S. RAMASWAMY): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

- (a) a copy of the Ministry of Home Affairs Notification G.S.R. No. 1683, dated the 2nd November, 1967, publishing corrigendum to Government Notifications G.S.R. Nos. 1547 and 1548, dated the 21st October, 1967.
- (b) a copy each of the following Notifications of the Ministry of Home Affairs, under sub-section (2) of section 3 of the All India Services Act, 1951 :—
  - (i) Notifications G.S.R. Nos. 1680 and 1681, dated the 3rd November, 1967.
  - (ii) Notification G.S.R. No. 1723, dated the 8th November, 1967.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT-1878/ 67 for (a) and (b).]