

[Shri Raj Bahadur.]

- (iii) Notification G.S.R. No. 1129, dated the 18th July, 1966, publishing the Press Council (Second Amendment) Rules, 1966.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT-6774/66 for (i) to (iii).]

REPORT AND ACCOUNTS (JANUARY-MARCH, 1965) OF THE FOOD CORPORATION OF INDIA, MADRAS AND RELATED PAPERS

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY) : Sir, on behalf of Shri P. Govinda Menon, I beg to lay on the Table, under sub-section (2) of section 35 of the Food Corporations Act, 1964, a copy of the Report and Accounts of the Food Corporation of India, Madras, for the period from 1st January to 31st March 1965, together with the Auditors' Report on the Accounts. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-6773/66.]

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS (1964-1965) OF THE CENTRAL COTTON COMMITTEE, BOMBAY AND RELATED PAPERS

SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY: Sir, also, on behalf of Shri S. D. Misra, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Forty-fourth Annual Report and Accounts of the Central Cotton Committee, Bombay, for the year 1964-65, together with the Audit Report on the Accounts. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-6708/66.]

STATEMENT RE. PROGRAMMES TO HELP AND DEVELOP EXPORTS

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR) : Sir, on behalf of Shri Manubhai Shah, I beg to lay on the Table a statement outlining selected immediate programmes to help and develop exports. [See Appendix LVII, Annexure No. 35.]

STATEMENT RE. LOSS OF LIFE IN HOUSE COLLAPSE IN DELHI

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS AND ALSO MINISTER OF DEFENCE SUPPLIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI) : Sir, I would like to make a statement on the collapse of some houses in Delhi yesterday.

It is with great pain and sorrow that Government learnt of the sad and tragic incidents in Delhi, which occurred yesterday when the country was celebrating its Independence Day. To the sufferers, their families and friends we send our heartfelt sympathy. The facts as they have emerged are :

There was heavy rain on the morning of the 15th August, 1966 followed by an earthquake tremor at about 7.46 A.M. Immediately thereafter two houses one in Dharampura, and the other in Hari Nagar Ashram tumbled down. A third house at Paharganj collapsed at 1.37 P.M. A message was received at Delhi Fire Service at Connaught Circus at 8.00 A.M. about Dharampura incident. Three units of fire brigade proceeded to the site within a minute and rescue operations began 5 minutes after 8 A.M. A total number of 5 units with 100 men working in two shifts and officers (including the Chief Fire Officer and the Deputy Chief Fire Officer) reached the site for rescue operations.

This was a three-storeyed house inside narrow lanes. A number of persons were buried in the debris. Excavation required extreme care in handling. Operations lasted 12 hours and eighteen bodies were recovered by 12.30 P.M., 14 of them were dead. Four injured persons are reported to be in a satisfactory condition. Another six persons who were not residents also received serious injuries. An Army Unit consisting of 50 men arrived at the site and assisted the Delhi Fire Service. The Engineering Department of the Delhi Municipal Corporation, the Mohalla Samiti, the

Home Guards and the people living in the locality co-operated with the Delhi Fire Service in these operations. The Delhi Police was also present to help. A six-bedded hospital unit was organised in close vicinity of the house. Two doctors with adequate equipment remained there throughout the day and rendered first aid. The Prime Minister visited the site at 12 noon with the Chief Commissioner and the Inspector General of Police. A demolition notice had been served on the owner and the occupiers of the house. The notice was served on the 23rd July 1966 and it expired on the 26th July 1966. Thereafter representations against demolitions were received as also assurance from some of the tenants that they will themselves attend to the dangerous portions of the house and carry out adequate repairs. The house was re-inspected on the 25th July, 1966. It was found that portions of the house were being demolished and repairs were being carried out. However, the owner of the house obtained an *ex-parte* stay order from a Civil Court in Delhi and the Corporation staff was prevented from demolishing the building.

At about the same time another house also collapsed at Hari Nagar Ashram. This was an unauthorised construction for which notice for demolition had been issued. One child died and 4 persons received injuries.

In Paharganj, a house collapsed at 1.30 P.M. resulting in the death of a passer-by.

On personal inquiry, the Home Minister arranged for precautions to be taken so that other dangerous houses in the neighbourhood may be vacated and directed that immediate survey be made to locate other houses which might be dangerous. Five houses in the vicinity have been evacuated as a precautionary measure, and the occupants have been offered alternative accommodation in a transit camp. Financial assistance amounting to Rs. 1,400 is being given to the families of the deceased. The Prime Minister has donated Rs. 10,000 for relief.

In order to find out the causes which were responsible for the incidents and for taking whatever remedial measures required to prevent recurrence, Government have decided to institute an inquiry immediately.

SHRI BANKA BEHARY DAS (Orissa): The Home Minister admitted that the proprietor of the house got an *ex-parte* injunction order against the Municipal authorities, but we are also told that the Municipal authorities did not go to the court to make any attempt to vacate the injunction order. Delhi has experienced several tremors within this period and I want an assurance from the Minister in view of the casualties that we are having, that steps will be taken to see that if the houses are ordered to be demolished and if the owners go for injunction and stay orders the Government will take proper steps to see that such *ex-parte* injunction orders are not enforced and that the injunction orders are vacated. I want to know whether he can give us such an assurance in this House so that we will not have to face such situations in Delhi.

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI: For demolition of houses, a survey of 54,000 houses was made out of which 111 notices for demolition had been issued. Out of 111, fifty have been demolished by the Corporation. Twentyeight have been demolished by the owners themselves. That gives the figure of 78. In 15 cases, stay orders have been issued in regard to which action has been taken to get the orders vacated. In the future as I said in the last paragraph of the statement, we will take care to see that immediate action is taken where such stay orders are given by the courts but after all it is a process of law. We may apply for the vacation of the stay order but that depends on how long the court takes to have a joint hearing.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA (Orissa): I would like the Minister to explain. He said that it was an *ex parte* judgment from the court, for injunction, How was it made *ex parte* when the

Delhi Administration or the Municipal Corporation wanted this particular house to be demolished because of its bad condition? How did they allow the judgment to be given *ex parte*?

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI : It is not a question of giving the judgment *ex parte*. It a person goes to a court of law on an affidavit asking to be given an interim stay order, if the court is satisfied, it gives an interim stay order.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN (Andhra Pradesh) : May I know, apart from the help that the Prime Minister and the Delhi Administration have promised, whether any definite steps will be taken and a programme made to rehabilitate these people on a permanent basis?

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI : These are three houses where this has happened. The question of making a permanent programme for rehabilitating them is a larger one but the first responsibility of the Corporation, as hon. Members suggested, is to make a survey of the houses which are dangerous and they should give notice to quit and some arrangements for their rehabilitation, if at all possible, should be made but I do not think it will be the responsibility of the Corporation to find accommodation for all these people. They may look into it but I do not think it may be possible to give alternative accommodation for all these people. Really the responsibility is of the owners of these houses to keep them in proper condition.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN : But the Government should help the corporation.

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI : Yes.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN : It must be taken as a matter of principle and applied in the future also

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI : Yes.

SHRI P. K. KUMARAN : It was stated that a survey will be conducted. May I know whether this survey will be conducted only in Delhi, because there are cities like Calcutta and Bombay also? Calcutta is as old as the British capitalism in India. There are congested places there also and because earthquakes are not there, the houses are not falling down. Will the survey be extended to them also so that the big cities in India will be covered so that all those places can be rebuilt?

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI : I did not say that a survey will be conducted. A survey has been made of 54,000 houses in Delhi by the Corporation. Primarily it is the responsibility of the Corporation and I am sure other Corporations and Municipalities also must be attending to their primary duty of seeing about the condition of the houses there.

SHRI P. K. KUMARAN : Will you instruct them?

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI : They should do it.

श्री बी० एन० मंडल (बिहार) : क्या मंत्री जी यह बतलायेंगे कि जिस समय भूकम्प हो रहा था उस समय प्रधान मंत्री अपना भाषण लाल किले में कर रही थीं या नहीं और अगर कर रही थीं तो क्यों नहीं उस भाषण को खत्म कर के अपने और लोगों को वहां जाने के लिये क्यों नहीं कहा?

श्री जयसुख लाल हाथी : जब प्रधान मंत्री वहां भाषण कर रही थीं तब उनको पता नहीं था कि मकान गिर गया है और गिर रहा है।

REFERENCE TO ARRESTS OF A.I.C.C. EMPLOYEES ON CHARGE OF ESPIONAGE

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA (Orissa) : Since the hon. the Home Minister is here, I would raise that point