

SHRI ANSABUDDIN AHMAD: Is there any truth in the press report freely circulated that Ceylon tea has regained its market because Indian tea has deteriorated in quality and also, because its price is higher?

SHRI SATISH CHANDRA: I do not know the source of information of the hon. Member. It is very difficult for us—and embarrassing also—to be comparing all these things in relation to Ceylon all the time. But the fact is that during the first six months of this year, we have exported much more tea than Ceylon.

SHRI N. M. LINGAM: Is it not a fact that although our exports have not fallen actually, they have not kept pace with the increase in exports by Ceylon and South Africa to the tea-consuming countries?

SHRI SATISH CHANDRA: The question relates to the United Arab Republic and we are improving upon the position that we had in the past.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Most of the questions are general. May I know whether it is a fact that the Chairman of the Tea Export Promotion Council in Western Europe is also the Chairman of Messrs. Helson Lyons & Company in Hamburg and that against this firm, there are certain allegations of manipulations in tea exports to the western part of Europe?

SHRI SATISH CHANDRA: The Tea Promotion Council in West Germany is a non-official organisation composed of the tea trade of West Germany. Some of the tea-producing countries like India and Ceylon also make contribution to the Council for promoting the tea-drinking habit there. I am not aware of the details which the hon. Member is referring to.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: May I know whether the hon. Minister is aware that serious allegations were made against this particular firm that

they were getting tea exported out of his country in a manner which is harmful to our country and Indian firms are being hard-pressed? If this is the case, why are such people who are not interested in the actual promotion of tea export are kept in such high positions? The Indian Government should have checked it.

SHRI SATISH CHANDRA: The Indian Government does not decide as to who will be the Chairman of the Council. That is decided by the Council itself.

SHRI N. M. LINGAM: May I know the steps taken by the Government to see that the high import duties imposed by West Germany against our tea are reduced so that our exports may be stepped up?

SHRI SATISH CHANDRA: This matter has been discussed from time to time. But the total revenue from duties on tea and coffee in West Germany is about one-seventh of their total budget. It is for that Government to decide. We cannot compel them to reduce their duties.

CONFERENCE OF BANDUNG COUNTRIES ON ECONOMIC ISSUES

*604. SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a certain amount of preparatory work has been completed for holding an Economic Conference of the Bandung countries; and

(b) if so, what is the latest stage of such preparations?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON) : (a) and (b) The proposal to hold a Conference of 'Bandung countries' to consider economic questions of common interest first came from the then Prime Minister of Ceylon, the late Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike. Our Prime Minister expressed his agreement to the pro-

posals and suggested that there should be a preliminary meeting at the level of officials of the five 'Colombo countries' to discuss the agenda and other related aspects. On the report of the preliminary meeting which was circulated to the various Governments concerned our Prime Minister replied suggesting that the final Conference be held in Colombo in December 1959 or any time after March 1960. However, the next Prime Minister of Ceylon, Mr. Dahanayaka, later explained that the consensus of opinion of the Prime Ministers of the Colombo Power countries was that the idea of such a Conference should be abandoned for the time being. Since then there have been no further talks or developments.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: May I know the names of the countries which are likely to participate in this proposed conference?

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON: Bandung countries.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: May I know whether countries with a different political ideology are likely to participate in this conference and, if so, whether their participation in it will fit in with the aims and objects of the conference?

SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: The conference is not being held. Therefore, the question does not arise.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: I would like to know whether we would pursue this matter or have dropped it.

SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: It is not we that dropped it. The events following the sad assassination of the Prime Minister of Ceylon led to this. Since then, all kinds of new conditions have arisen. If and when it is held, who might be invited, I cannot answer because great changes are taking place, and as the House knows, dozens of new countries in Africa have become free and all that, and who will

be invited from among the new ones, who will not be invited who were previously invited, that would be a question for the sponsors of any such conference in future.

SHRI N. SRI RAMA REDDY: May I know whether any Bandung spirit is still left in the Bandung countries?

SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: Well, I take, it depends on particular individuals or particular countries. A good thing that has come into existence can never vanish into thin air.

COURT OF INQUIRY ON ABOLITION OF CONTRACT SYSTEM IN COAL MINES

*605. DR. A. SUBBA RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Court of Inquiry to go into the question of abolition of contract system in coal mines as recommended by the Industrial Committee on Coal Mining in its Seventh Session has been set up;

(b) if so, who are the members of this Court of Inquiry; and

(c) if the reply to part (a) above be in the negative, when it is likely to be set up?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI ABID ALI): (a) to (c) Decision has been taken to set up a Court of Inquiry under section 6 of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 and a notification will be issued shortly.

फाऊंटैन पैन उद्योग

*६०६. श्री राम सहाय : क्या वाणिज्य तथा उद्योग मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) फाऊंटैन पैन उद्योग को बढ़ावा देने के लिये क्या विदेशी विशेषज्ञों को बुलाने के किसी प्रस्ताव पर सरकार विचार कर रही है ; और