

Shri V. P. Nayar: It has been revealed by the Spices Inquiry Committee that the annual loss, that is, by way of fruits which are not consumed, will be nothing less than 40,000 maunds of fruits. Are Government aware that these fruits cannot be consumed because of the presence of anacardic acid, which is astringent to taste? If so, has the laboratory evolved a process to neutralise the taste of this anacardic acid so that the fruits may be consumed?

Mr. Speaker: Why does not the hon. Minister put Shri V. P. Nayar in touch with the scientists there?

Shri V. P. Nayar: I have recently been to the Institute and I found that this was not one of the specific problems tackled there.

Mr. Speaker: If he is not able to get the information from the technical personnel there, does he expect any further information from the hon. Minister here? Next question.

Machinery

*507. **Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani:** Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that stocks of machinery are lying in and around Kankinara-Panagarh-Calcutta for the last 13 years or so and Government have been spending considerable amount for their looking after; and

(b) if so, the action taken in the matter?

The Deputy Minister of Defence (Sardar Majithia): (a) Yes, Sir. Stocks of machinery and other stores in serviceable and repairable condition are held in the Engineer Stores Depots at Kankinara and Panagarh. There is no other machinery depot in and around Calcutta.

(b) Frequent surveys are carried out at these depots with a view to declaring surpluses from time to time. Stores of the value of about Rs. 545 lakhs have been declared for disposal since 1951. In present circumstances

of import restrictions and paucity of foreign exchange very rigid restrictions on disposal of otherwise disposable property, are considered essential.

Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani: May I know whether Government have suffered any losses in these stocks by way of theft and damages?

The Minister of Defence (Shri Krishna Menon): In all depots, there are cases of small theft. But in regard to these two depots, nothing of any serious character has been brought to notice. They are kept under proper guard and security.

Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani: I did not follow the answer.

Mr. Speaker: In all depots, there is an amount of theft, but it is not abnormal here.

Sardar Majithia: Not very serious.

Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani: Can we have the figures of valuation of the theft?

Mr. Speaker: Average percentage?

Shri Tyagi: In the country.

Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani: Not average, but in these particular cases.

Shri Krishna Menon: No case of theft requiring special attention in these two depots has been brought to our notice. These places are adequately safeguarded because they contain valuable equipment. If I may say so, there is a somewhat erroneous popular conception that the stores in depots are waste products. They are goods that came at the end of the war, and in the present conditions the Defence Ministry has thought it necessary to impose a moratorium on disposals, because of the use that we can make of these in production or construction.

Shri Ranga: These have been in storage for the last 13 years. Can we not have an idea of whether they suffered any damage when they have been kept in storage for such a long period? And what is meant by normal loss? We are not able to understand.

Is there any kind of average degree of loss that Government are prepared to consider to be reasonable?

Shri Krishna Menon: I would make no reference to loss in the sense of the question. I was asked whether there were thefts. It is possible that in a depot there may be occasional thefts of a small character, but nothing serious in these two depots has been brought to our notice.

With regard to keeping them for ten years, the stores are normally used as they are. Parts may be used; something may be built into something else. In the case of this equipment, ten years is not a very long period. I think to give them away would not be in the public interest; so far as the Defence Ministry is concerned, would be inadvisable and it would not be in the national interest either.

श्री कृष्णा मेनन: मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या वह सब सामान छाया में पड़ा हुआ है या छोपन में ?

Shri Krishna Menon: I understand the question is whether they are kept in open air or under covered accommodation. This is a big problem which no Finance Minister has been able completely to solve so far. We require at least 9 million square feet of covered space to cover the vehicles that lie in the open. We regret they are being left in the open, but we have not the resources to cover all of them. Gradual progress is being made and I think administrative sanction has been given for upto 3 lakh square feet—a very small proportion. We confess that it should not be kept in the open, but there is not the place to keep it under cover.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: In almost all the depots, there are serviceable items. May I know whether any steps have been taken to use or re-process these items for our use in other defence establishments like ordnance factories? Has any committee been formed to see that these things are properly screened before being auctioned, to find out whether some of the items, out of these scraps can be used in ordnance factories?

Shri Krishna Menon: I think I answered this question.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister has said that stores which are useful are made use of.

Shri M. R. Krishna: What is the total value of the U.S. disposal stores purchased by the Government of India still left unused and what percentage of it is going to be used by Defence in future?

Shri Krishna Menon: No disposal stores have been purchased by the Government of India.

Mirza Ghalib's Delhi House

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Shri Vajpayee:
Shri V. C. Shukla:
Shri Rameshwar Tanti:
*508. { Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:
Shri Shivananjappa:
Shri Sadhan Gupta:
Shri Mohan Swarup:

Will the Minister of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs be pleased to state:—

(a) whether it is a fact that the Sahitya Akadami's Advisory Board for Urdu has passed a resolution requesting Government to take early steps to acquire the Delhi house of Mirza Ghalib for the purpose of converting it into a suitable memorial; and

(b) if so, the action taken in the matter?

The Minister of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs (Shri Humayun Kabir): (a) Yes, Sir, on the 15th of May, 1958.

(b) The matter is under consideration.

Shri Vajpayee: May I know the estimated cost of the proposed memorial?

Shri Humayun Kabir: The site of the building has not yet been handed over to us; and, therefore, details have not been worked out.