

(d) if so, whether the Commission propose to visit Kerala?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Commerce (Shri Shaif Qureshi):

(a), (e) and (d) Yes, Sir

(b) The Commission will visit the State of Kerala only.

#### Import of Synthetic Rubber

302. Shrimati Susela Gopalan:  
Shri C. K. Chakrapani:

Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that licence for importing synthetic rubber cannot be granted for more than 6,000 tons at a time;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government have granted licences for importing 32,000 tons of synthetic rubber recently at a time, and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Commerce (Shri Shaif Qureshi):

(a) No, Sir. Although the import of rubber, whether natural or synthetic, requires an import licence, there is no regulation to the effect that not more than 6,000 tons at a time should be licensed.

(b) The total import of synthetic rubber during 1966-67 has been of the order of about 4,700 tons only. This has been done taking into account the deficit between the available domestic supplies of natural and synthetic rubber and actual requirements for rubber for various consuming industries.

(c) Does not arise.

#### Kerala Rubber Growers

303. Shrimati Susela Gopalan:  
Shri C. K. Chakrapani:  
Shri C. Janardhanan:  
Shri Vasudevam Nair:  
Shri F. C. Adichean:

Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention

has been drawn to the proposals put forward at the recent conference of the Kerala Rubber Growers held in Pala; that the price of natural rubber be fixed at Rs 6 per kilo and that the rubber factories be opened under the control of the Rubber Board to assist the rubber growers;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government to these proposals; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to protect the interest of small growers?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Commerce (Shri Shaif Qureshi):  
(a) Representations have been received urging Government *inter alia* to revise the terms of reference to the Tariff Commission about the fixation of fair price of indigenous natural rubber and for directing the Tariff Commission to restrict their enquiry to the small growers only. No representation for fixing the price of indigenous natural rubber at Rs 6 per kg has been received.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Interest free loans and subsidies are given to the small growers so as to enable them to develop their holdings. The question of fixation of a fair price of their produce will be considered on receipt of the recommendations of the Tariff Commission.

#### Bharathi Mills, Pondichery

304. Shri Umanath:  
Shri F. Gopalan:  
Shri C. K. Chakrapani:  
Shri Jyotirmoy Basu:  
Shri V. V. Menon:  
Shri K. Anirudhan:

Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of ex-workers of the Bharathi Mills, Pondichery have still not been reinstated even after the Government's take-over of the mills;

(b) if so, the number of those who are still unemployed and the reasons therefor;