

15.29 hrs.

COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES

EXTENSION OF TIME FOR PRESENTATION OF REPORT

DR. HENRY AUSTIN (Ernakulam): I beg to move:

"That this House do extend upto the last day of the next session the time for the presentation of the Report of the Committee of Privileges on the question of privilege regarding handcuffing of Shri Ishwar Chaudhry, M.P., referred to the Committee on the 30th August, 1974"

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That this House do extend upto the last day of the next session the time for the presentation of the Report of the Committee of Privileges on the question of privilege regarding handcuffing of Shri Ishwar Chaudhry, M.P. referred to the Committee on the 30th August, 1974"

The motion was adopted.

15 30 hrs.

MATTER UNDER RULE 377

RE: MICA AND SHELLAC INDUSTRIES

SHRI CHAPALENDU BHATTACHARYYA (Giridih): Sir, the time of the House has been taken up on so many minor second-rate matters that the anguish of lakhs of workers working in the mica industry and a lakh of families working as stick-lac growers have not been heard on the floor of the House. I have been requesting for a calling attention motion for the last four days, but all I am getting is permission to raise it under Rule 377 and the minister is not there to reply to the very serious situation which has arisen and which has affected Chotanagpur plateau,

portions of M.P. and the district of Purulia in the eastern region.

The mica trade was canalised in 1972 to protect the weaker section of the people against the growth of monopolistic trends in the mica export trade as it was steadily going into the hands of half a dozen or a dozen mica exporters. This canalisation was to be effected through the MMTC. For six months the MMTC did not define who constituted the weaker section of the trade. Then it came out with a definition which by literal or formal interpretation could include even the largest of the mica exporters. Therefore, the definition of the weaker section by the MMTC was an exercise in futility.

Then they started purchasing mica and fixing the minimum floor price for different varieties of mica for export. The mica trade is a very complex trade with 200 varieties of mica and 150 exporters with the price ranging from Re. 1 to Rs. 1000 per kg.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please ask a question.

SHRI CHAPALENDU BHATTACHARYYA: Is it a fact that some of the favourites are being tipped off in advance by about a month that such and such varieties of mica would be purchased so that they could build up stock of such varieties of mica? Is it also a fact that the Bihar Mica Exporters' organisation which comprises the largest number of mica exporters, has been kept at arms' length by the Mica Corporation, which is a subsidiary of the MMTC? Then, may I know whether in the fixation of the minimum floor price of different varieties of mica, the prices of No. 6 and mica loose splitting, which are labour intensive, were given very low percentage increase and as a consequence the potential of employment of the mica industry could not be realised? The other question is whether the low minimum price for No. 6 and loose splittings have receded on the mica production from mines it-