

resolution last year recommending to the Government for its nationalisation.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : Sir, we have received a lot of representations. The hon. Member has met me a number of times on this issue. And no decision has been taken so far.

Solution to Ethnic Violence in Sri Lanka

***64. SHRI UTTAM RATHOD:
SHRI KAMAL NATH :**

Will the Minister of **EXTERNAL AFFAIRS** be pleased to state

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to recent incidents of outbreak of violence in some areas of Sri Lanka endangering the security of minorities of Indian origin there;

(b) if so, whether any new steps have been taken by Government to help the Government of Sri Lanka to solve the problem of ethnic violence in that country; and

(c) if so, the reaction of Sri Lanka Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). Government continue to firmly believe that the longstanding ethnic problem in Sri Lanka can be resolved only politically, and not militarily. Government are in touch with the Sri Lankan Government.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[*English*]

Export of Jute Products

***65. SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN :** Will the Minister of **COMMERCE AND SUPPLY** be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to export more jute products this year than the previous years ;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the quantity to be exported ; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND SUPPLY (SRI P.A. SANGMA) : (a) to (c). The export of jute goods during April-September 1984 was worth Rs. 141.01 crores as compared to Rs. 90.77 crores during the same period of 1983. It is expected that export of jute goods during financial year 1984-85 is likely to be around 275.00 tonnes valued at over Rs. 300 crores compared to the level of 233.500 tonnes valued at Rs. 163.71 crores achieved during 1983-84. However, as a result of high prices of raw jute, the cost of production of jute goods have also risen sharply making it difficult for exporters to compete in overseas markets by offering competitive prices. Besides, there is severe competition from the synthetics and other producing countries in the international market.

Reduction in Upper Age Limit for Recruitment to Civil Services

***66. SHRI BHOLA RAUT :** Will the **PRIME MINISTER** be pleased to state :

(a) whether the upper age limit for Civil Services recruitment by U.P.S.C. has been reduced from 28 years to 26 years ;

(b) whether the age limit was enhanced from 26 years to 28 years by U.P.S.C. in 1979 ; and

(c) if so what action Government propose to take to safeguard the interests of candidates eligible within the age ceiling of years ?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI RAJIV GANDHI) : (a) to (c). In 1979 while introducing the new scheme for Civil Services Examination, Government raised the upper age limit from 26 years, to 28 years though the Kothari Committee as well as the Union Public Service

Commission had recommended retention of the then existing upper age limit of 26 year. Subsequently, the National Training Conference on Training of Civil Servants in India, Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel National Police Academy, Hyderabad and the Union Public Service Commission informed that the higher age limit is adversely affecting the proper training and moulding of the new recruits for the requirements of the services. The Union Public Service Commission advised that the upper age limit be reduced to 26 years. After careful consideration of the matter, it was decided in October 1983 to reduce the upper age limit to 26 years and to give effect to this from 1985 examination, so as to allow time for intending candidates to have at least one more chance to take the examination with higher age limit. This decision was also given wide publicity. Taking into account further representations received for applying the reduced upper age limit of 26 years from some other later date, Government have now decided that this reduced age limit would be effective from 1986 examination and not from 1985 examination.

Attack on Indian Fishermen by Sri Lanka Navy

*67. SHRI K.T. KOSALRAM : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) how many times Sri Lanka Navy has attacked unarmed Indian fishermen in the Indian territorial waters off Rameshwaram coast, the number of lives lost and the number of fishermen missing during last two years ; and

(b) the steps being taken to stop such killing of Indian fishermen by Sri Lanka Navy ?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI RAJIV GANDHI) : (a) There have been several incidents during the last two years in which Sri Lanka Naval vessels have attacked unarmed Indian fishermen

in the Indian territorial waters off the Rameshwaram coast.

- (i) In 1983, nine incident were reported.
- (ii) In 1984, twelve incidents were reported.
- (iii) Skippers of four fishing boats arrested in early 1984 are still in Sri Lanka. Seventeen skippers with their boats arrested on 11th October, 1984 are being held in Sri Lanka.
- (iv) Three fishermen have been killed in two separate incidents in the last two months.
- (v) On 11th January a Sri Lankan patrol boat was found well within Indian territorial waters harassing our fishermen and depriving them of their catches of fish and nets. The boat and seven crew members are held in India.

(b) Our Coast Guard has intensified patrolling. The Navy has also been asked to keep vigil.

We have lodged strong protests with Lankan Government and expressed concern over the recurrence of such incidents of intrusion in our territorial waters. We have also asked the Sri Lankan Government for the immediate release of skippers and boats and for the payment of compensation for the loss of life and property.

Reopening of Sick Industries in West Bengal

*68. SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHURY : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of letters urging for financial help and other support for the reopening of sick industries in West