

14 Feb, 1964

(d) whether it is a fact that huge quantity of long staple wool is lying undisposed and import licences are being issued; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

**The Minister of Industry (Shri Kanungo):** (a) to (e). A statement is laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library, See No. LT-2293/64].

12 hrs.

### OBITUARY REFERENCE

**Mr. Speaker:** I have to inform the House of the sad demise of Shri V. T. Krishnamachari who passed away at Madras on the 13th February, 1964 at the age of 83.

He was a Member and Vice-President of the Constituent Assembly of India during the years 1947 to 1950.

We deeply mourn the loss of this friend and I am sure the House will join me in conveying our condolences to the bereaved family.

The House may stand in silence for a short while to express its sorrow.

*The Members then stood in silence for a short while.*

12.01 hrs.

### CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

#### FIRE AT THE PLANT OF THE HEAVY ENGINEERING CORPORATION, RANCHI

**Shri S. N. Chaturvedi (Firozabad):** I call the attention of the Minister of Steel, Mines and Heavy Engineering on the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:—

The loss caused by fire on the 29th January, 1964 at the Heavy Machine Building Plant of the Heavy Engineering Corporation, Ranchi.

**The Minister of Steel, Mines and Heavy Engineering (Shri C. Subramaniam):** A fire broke out in one of the open gantries of the Heavy Machine Building Plant at Ranchi in the early hours of January 29, 1964. The news of the fire was communicated to the Chairman of the Heavy Engineering Corporation Ltd. at about 5.00 in the morning from the Corporation's Telephone Exchange. Immediately thereafter almost all the top officers of the Corporation, who were present in station, reached the spot and with the help of fire-fighting staff, security men and such other employees who could be collected at that time, tried to localise the fire and managed to bring it under control. The fire was completely extinguished by about 7.30 a.m.

2. The place where the fire occurred is enclosed by barbed wire and is in charge of the security staff who are posted on duty all the 24 hours. The total area affected by the fire was about 600 sq. ft.

3. It is estimated that about 100 packages in all have been damaged by this fire. These consisted of 36 machine tools, 11 cranes, 7 electrical transformers and distribution boards etc. The total value of the equipments contained in all these packages is estimated to be about Rs. 45 lakhs. It is yet to be determined whether any portion of this equipment can be salvaged and used by importing only replacement for damaged components. The extent to which salvaging of various components is possible will be known when detailed examination of each and every package is done by the technical officers of the Corporation. The total loss will be reduced to the extent to which it will be possible to salvage the components.

4. The Heavy Machine Building Plant is being put up with the technical collaboration of the U.S.S.R. authorities. The Head of the Russian

[Shri C. Subramaniam]

Experts has examined the damaged packages in regard to its effects on the production programme of Heavy Engineering Corporation. He is of the opinion that by transferring some machine tools etc. meant for the other shops to reduction gear department which is scheduled to go in production during the year 1964, it will be possible to maintain the production programme of 1964. However, if in the meantime supply of these equipments for the medium and heavy machine shops is not arranged the production programme of 1965 is likely to suffer.

5. The Corporation authorities as well as the Ministry have got into touch with the top representatives of U.S.S.R. Government and have impressed on them the imperative need of replacing the damaged machine tools, etc. on a priority basis. It is expected that co-operation of Russian authorities will be available to us in full measure and the set-back to our production programme, if any, will be for the shortest possible duration.

6. A list of the important equipment damaged is laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library, See No. LT-2294/64].

7. The case has been reported to the police and the police is conducting investigations and have taken charge of the affected area. As soon as the police authorities permit the Corporation staff to examine these packages in detail, the extent of damage will be more precisely known, both item-wise and in terms of money value.

8. As the matter is being investigated by the police, it is premature to express any opinion about the cause of fire and other connected matters.

**Shri S. N. Chaturvedi:** May I know whether there has been a demand from the workers for an inquiry by a

High Court Judge and for the removal of the Chief Security Officer to enable them to give evidence without fear of victimisation and the Government's reaction thereto?

**Shri C. Subramaniam:** Just now the police investigation is going on. That will have to be completed. After that, a general inquiry will be made to find out whether there were any deficiencies on the part of the management which led to this occurrence of fire.

**श्री शशिरंजन (पपरी) :** क्या सरकार ने इस बात का पता लगाने की कोशिश की है कि आग कितने बजे लगी और उसकी खबर कितने बजे मालूम हुई ? और क्या यह बात सही है कि वहां पर आग बुझाने की कोई व्यवस्था नहीं थी ?

**इस्पत, खान और भारी इंजीनियरिंग मंत्री (श्री प्र० च० सेठी) :** क्योंकि अरली अक्स में आग लगी थी...

**Shri C. Subramaniam:** It is now estimated that the fire should have started round about 3 a.m. or 3.30 a.m. The news reached the chairman only at about five o'clock.

**Shri Tyagi:** Why so late?

**Shri C. Subramaniam:** That is the matter under investigation.

**श्री शशिरंजन :** मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या वहां आग बुझाने की व्यवस्था नहीं थी ?

**Mr. Speaker:** That would be known only after investigation.

**Shri Raghunath Singh (Varanasi):** Was there no fire-fighting equipment? Was it not commissioned?

**Shri C. Subramaniam:** The fire-fighting equipment was there. After the news of fire was received, the fire-fighting equipment came there and put out the fire.

श्री ह० च० सोय : (सिंहभूम) : क्या ह बात सही है कि इसके पहले भी एक दफा आग लगी थी । तो इस सम्बन्ध में फायर इक्विपमेंट का इन्तिजाम क्यों नहीं किया गया ?

**Shri C. Subramaniam:** The fire-fighting equipment was there....

**Shri Shashi Ranjan:** But it was not in working order.

**Shri C. Subramaniam:** And it was the fire-fighting equipment which put out the fire.

**Shri Shashi Ranjan:** But it was not in working order.

**Shri C. Subramaniam:** I do not have any such information just now. An inquiry is being made, and perhaps, further details will be available thereafter.

**Shri Indrajit Gupta** (Calcutta South West): Although I know that the matter is under investigation, I would like to know whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report that behind the mystery of the out-break of this fire within a space enclosed by barbed wire lies the long-drawn-out quarrel or rivalry which has been taking place at the HEC between two rival wings of the INTUC struggling for recognition from the authorities. This report has appeared in the papers. Has it been brought to the notice of Government? Will the police be asked to investigate into that also?

**Shri C. Subramaniam:** The police are investigating into every aspect. I am sure they will take notice of the faction which exists in the labour union also.

**Shri Yamuna Prasad Mandal** (Jainagar): In view of the fact that this is the second fire there, what steps have been taken to prevent the recurrence of such sad event?

**Shri C. Subramaniam:** To say that this is the second fire is a little bit misleading, because the first accident occurred when a spark fell on a package and it caught fire and it was im-

mediately extinguished. As far as this fire is concerned, there is something more behind it. That is why it is under investigation, and we would be able to know the facts only when the investigation is complete.

**श्री राम शेखर प्रसाद सिंह** (छपरा) :

क्या यह सही है कि वहां पर कुल मिला कर ६ फायर ब्रिगेड हैवी इंजीनियरिंग कारपोरेशन के पास हैं, जि से तीन ता बिल्स खरब हाल थे बाकी के दो के ड्राइवर ? क्या यह सही है कि ऐसा इसलिए हुआ कि यह सेबटेज की बात थी ?

**अध्यक्ष महोदय :** सेबटेज का पता तो इन्वस्टीगेशन से चलेगा ।

**Shri C. Subramaniam:** Whether there was any sabotage or not is a matter under investigation.

**Shri Ramshekhar Prasad Singh:** I am sorry that the hon. Minister has not perhaps followed what I had said in Hindi.

**Mr. Speaker:** Nor could I hear the hon. Member.

**Shri Ramshekhar Prasad Singh:** I shall repeat it in English now. There were altogether six fire brigades, out of which three had gone out of order, and there were no drivers for two of the remaining three. Is it a fact that this was due to sabotage?

**Shri C. Subramaniam:** As I have said, all these matters are under investigation now, and I would not hazard any opinion just now.

**Shri Ramshekhar Prasad Singh:** The existence of the fire brigades in that condition is also a matter for investigation.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. Member has put his question already, and he has said that three of them were out of order because of some sabotage. The hon. Minister says that that would be known only after the investigation is over.

**Shri S. M. Banerjee** (Kanpur): After hearing the statement of the hon. Minister it appears that it was a case of sabotage. I would like to know

[Shri S. M. Banerjee]

whether the investigation has been entrusted to the local police or to the Central Intelligence Bureau or to the Special Police Establishment.

**Shri C. Subramaniam:** A special officer who is in charge of security arrangements for the public sector projects is also associated with the investigation.

12.09 hrs.

RE: MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT

**Mr. Speaker:** Now, papers to be laid on the Table.

**श्री बागड़ी (हिसार) :** अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैंने एक कामरोको प्रस्ताव दिया था महंगाई और अकाल के बारे में...

**अध्यक्ष महोदय :** मैं आपको बतलाता हूँ कि मैंने उसका क्या किया है, आप उसके मजमून में नहीं जा सकते।

मुझे आपका कामरोको प्रस्ताव मिला था, मगर मैंने उसी दिन, ११ तारीख को, कहा था कि चूँकि हम प्रजीडेंट के एड्रेस पर चल रहे हैं इस वास्ते उसमें उसका मजमून लाया जा सकता है। आपकी पार्टी को आज या कल समय मिलने वाला है और उस मौके पर आप इसको डिस्कस कर सकते हैं। इस लिए आपका वह कामरोको प्रस्ताव मंजूर नहीं किया गया।

**श्री बागड़ी :** अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं इसमें कुछ थोड़ा सा अर्ज करना चाहता हूँ। निवेदन यह है कि सवाल इस बात का नहीं है कि इस बात की चर्चा हो जाय या वह अल्फाज सदन में आ जाय। सवाल तो इस बात का है कि कामरोको प्रस्ताव तभी आता है कि अगर उस बात के ऊपर विचार न हो तो देश में टूट फूट हो जाय या देश में घोर नुकसान हो। यह आज जो महंगाई और अकाल की बात मैं कहता हूँ वह इस नाते कहता हूँ कि अगर यह बढ़ती हुई कीमतों और महंगाई के बारे में इस सदन ने तत्काल विचार न किया और उसका कोई ल नहीं सोचा तो देश...

**अध्यक्ष महोदय :** अब आप बैठिये। मैंने आप को सुन लिया। मैं इससे पहले भी कई दफ़े यह चीज कह चुका हूँ कि अगर मैं अपने दफ़्तर में कोई प्रस्ताव नामंजूर करूँ और मेम्बर साहब को शिकायत हो तो उनकी बड़ी मेहरबानी होगी कि वह मेरे पास आकर अपनी शिकायत को बतलायें और अपनी दलील दें ताकि मैं भी समझ सकूँ लेकिन ऐसा न कर हाउस में बार बार उठ कर बोलना मैं पहले भी कह चुका हूँ कि यह उचित नहीं है। मेम्बर साहब फिर वही बाधा डालने का पुराना तरीका बर्त रहे हैं और इस तरह यहाँ हाउस में जो कार्य-वाही चल रही है उसमें रुकावट डालते हैं मैं उनसे फिर दरखास्त करूँगा कि अभी उनकी यदि शिकायत है तो वह इसके लिए मेरे पास आयें, मुझ से समझें और मुझे खुद समझायें। फिर आपस में बैठ कर तसल्ली करेंगे और अगर तब भी उनको तसल्ली न हो तो वह लिख सकते हैं।

**श्री बागड़ी :** इसमें मेरा एक निवेदन है कि मैं वहाँ बाहर उनके पास जाऊँ और बात करूँ यह कोई जरूरी नहीं है। यह तो ठीक है कि वे जुगुन हैं, नेता हैं और उनकी मेरे दिल में क्रोध व इज्जत है लेकिन मेरा दरअसल यह सदन है जहाँ कि बात उठाई जानी चाहिए और हाउस ही अल्टीमेट एथारिटी है कि वह इसका आखिरी फैसला दे कि यह बात यहाँ सदन में उठने दी जाय या नहीं और इसलिए मैं इस बात को सदन के सामने ही रखना चाहूँगा...

**अध्यक्ष महोदय :** अब माननीय सदस्य बैठ जायें। अमेरिका में तो यह है कि वहाँ स्वीकार कोई फैसला दे तो हाउस के पास अपील हो सकती है लेकिन यहाँ यह चीज नहीं है। इसका फैसला करना मेरे हाथ में है और स्वीकार की पोझिशन में मैंने फैसला दे दिया है वह आपको मानना होगा और इस बास्ते इसमें और ज्यादा कुछ नहीं हो सकता है।