

departments of the Government of India to find out some way to see that leases are granted for mini cement factories?

SHRI CHARANJIT CHANANA: As far as the coordination between the Forest Department and the Industry Department is concerned, in view of the Prime Minister's directive to maintain forests in the interest of keeping ecological balance, deforestation will not be allowed at all. There might only be a few cases where there are locational problems. The applicant will be advised to shift the location. But deforestation will not be allowed at all.

Secondly, as far as mini cement plants are concerned, there are only 53 units of a capacity of 18.99 lakh tonnes. It is a very small figure. I would like the House to be informed that, as on 1-8-1981, the existing capacity and schemes approved by the Government are of the capacity of 6525 million tonnes in public sector and private sector. In view of this, we are sure that by the end of the 6th Five Year Plan, we will in fact be heading towards surplus cement economy rather than shortage economy. Unfortunately the setting up of a cement plant has a question period.

SHRI A. NEELALOHITHADASAN NADAR: Is it not a fact that step-motherly attitude is shown towards Kerala in the allotment of cement? Taking into consideration the needs of Kerala, a little percentage of cement is being allotted to Kerala. If that is so, may I know whether the Government would be pleased to take special interest in allotting more cement to Kerala?

SHRI CHARANJIT CHANANA: I would advise the hon. Member to orient his question in collaboration with the Minister concerned in the Kerala State Government because we do not discriminate against any State Government as far as allocation of cement is concerned. The cement is allocated on a common formula evolved under the Cement Control Order for all the States in the country.

Ray Commission on spirit scandal

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*45. **SHRI HARINATH MISRA:**

SHRI A. T. PATIL:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Union Government have appointed the Ray Commission to enquire into the 'Spirit Scandal' involving movement of rectified spirit between the States of Tamil Nadu and Kerala;

(b) if so, the terms of reference of the Commission; and

(c) whether any time-limit has been set for the Commission to submit its report, if so, what?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS AND DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The terms of reference of the Commission are contained in the Notification No. S.O. 488(E) dated the 18th June, 1981, copy of which is placed on the Table.

(c) Yes, Sir. Six months.

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

(Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms)

NOTIFICATION

New Delhi, the 18th June, 1981

S.O. 488(E).—Whereas the Central Government is of opinion that it is necessary to appoint a Commission of Inquiry for the purpose of making an inquiry into a definite matter of public importance, namely, diversion of large quantities of sugarcane molasses from sugar factories in Tamil Nadu for conversion into rectified spirit and potable alcohol, resulting in huge loss of revenue to the State exchequer, the illegal movement, during the period from June, 1979 onwards, of huge quantities of rectified spirit, and in excess of the permitted quantities, in and from the State of Tamil

Nadu to and in the State of Kerala, and the alleged corrupt practices relating thereto:

Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 3 of the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952 (60 of 1952), the Central Government hereby appoints a Commission of Inquiry consisting of a single member, namely, Shri S. K. Ray, retired Chief Justice of the Orissa High Court.

2. The terms of reference of the Commission shall be as follows:—

(a) to inquire into the matters indicated in the Annexure to this Notification arising out of the allegations contained in the Memorandum signed by 21 Members of Parliament and the Memorandum dated the 6th February, 1981, received from some Members of the Kerala State Legislative Assembly and others, addressed to the Prime Minister;

(b) to inquire into any irregularity, impropriety, misconduct or contravention of law, on the part of any person in relation to any matter referred to in the allegations aforesaid;

(c) to inquire into any other matter, which arises from, or is connected with, or incidental to, any act, omission or transaction referred to in the allegations aforesaid.

3. The headquarters of the Commission will be at New Delhi.

4. The Commission, will complete its inquiries and report to the Central Government within a period of six months.

5. And whereas the Central Government is of opinion that, having regard to the nature of the inquiry to be made by the Commission and other circumstances of the case, all the provisions of sub-section (2), sub-section (3), sub-section (4) and sub-section (5) of section 5 of the

Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952 (60 of 1952), should be made applicable to the Commission. The Central Government hereby directs, in exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (1) of the said section 5, that all the provisions of the said sub-sections (2), (3), (4) and (5) of that section shall apply to the Commission.

F. No. 375/11/81-AVD. IV)

A.C. BANDOPADHYAY, Secy.

ANNEXURE

MEMORANDUM FROM 21 MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

(1) Whether large quantities of sugarcane molasses were diverted unauthorisedly by the sugar factories in Tamil Nadu, in collusion with distilleries, for the illegal manufacture and sale of rectified spirit, resulting in loss of revenue to the Central or State exchequer, amounting to over a crore of rupees.

(2) Whether the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has misused his power as Minister in charge of Excise in the collection of huge funds through the disposal of such illicit spirit.

(3) Whether thousands of tons of sugarcane molasses were written off under one pretext or the other and whether the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu was instrumental in facilitating the distilleries to commit the illegal disposal of rectified spirit to enrich himself.

(4) Whether Government officials, posted as Distillery Officers, helped distilleries in Tamil Nadu to carry on the clandestine production and disposal of rectified spirit.

(5) Whether order dated 26th June, 1979 of the Government of Tamil Nadu allowing the distilleries, to lift rectified spirit without the escort of revenue officials and disbanding the check-posts created for the purpose

was issued with a view to enabling the distilleries to move illegally more than the permitted quantities of rectified spirit to other States.

(6) Whether the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu did not take any action against the persons, who were permitted to export 10 lakh litres of rectified spirit to other States, but had actually lifted 15 lakh liters as allegedly admitted by him while speaking in the Chamber of Commerce at Madras, in October, 1980.

(7) Whether the imposition of a ban on export of rectified spirit and relaxation of the same on several occasions by the Government of Tamil Nadu were done with a view to enabling any person to make huge illegal gain.

(8) Whether many industries in Tamil Nadu were not getting rectified spirit, which is a raw material needed by them, and as such there was no ground for exporting rectified spirit out of Tamil Nadu.

(9) Whether export of 9.96 lakh litres of rectified spirit from Messrs Arvind Distillery and Chemicals Limited, South Arcot District to Messrs Mannam Sugar Mills Co-operative Limited in Kerala by Shri Ahmed Khan, a private contractor, who was not authorised by the Government of Kerala, was hurriedly permitted by the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.

(10) Whether the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu accepted the same "No Objection Certificate" to export rectified spirit from Messrs Arvind Distilleries in South Arcot to Messrs Mannam Sugar Mills Co-operative Limited, for the export of rectified spirit from Messrs Vorion Chemicals and Distilleries Limited, Chengalpattu District and whether the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu had misused his office in allowing these exports after collecting several lakhs of rupees from the parties and allowed them free trade of alcohol out of Tamil Nadu.

(11) Whether the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu exerted his influence to expunge, from the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, the names of his close friends, allegedly involved in the matter, referred to by the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly of Tamil Nadu.

MEMORANDUM RECEIVED FROM SOME MEMBERS OF THE KERALA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY AND OTHERS

(1) Whether it was disclosed in a conference of excise contractors, convened by the Excise Minister of Kerala, that, if huge amounts were paid as bribes, rectified spirit required to manufacture arrack would be available outside Kerala to meet the demands for the Onam festival in August, 1980 and the Excise Minister of Kerala gave them the green signal to arrange to procure the required quantity of rectified spirit by any means.

(2) Whether, following the said conference, several discussions and negotiations were held by the Excise Minister of Kerala with Shri Ahmed Khan and, contrary to the normal procedure followed by the Excise Department and the long-standing decision of the Kerala Cabinet, the said Shri Ahmed Khan, who is neither an excise contractor nor a person of substantial financial stability, was authorised, on the special instructions of the Excise Minister of Kerala, to procure 10 lakh litres of rectified spirit from Messrs Arvind Distilleries and Chemicals Limited South Arcot District, requiring a minimum investment of about Rs. 50 lakhs, and supply the same to the authorised arrack distilling units of Messrs Mannam Sugar Mills Co-operative Limited in Kerala at Rs. 3 per litre.

(3) Whether, shortly before the negotiations with the said Shri

Ahmed Khan started, the practice of submission of papers to the Excise Minister of Kerala through the Private Secretary, who is of the rank of a Joint Secretary, was changed and all the excise files were routed to the Minister through the Additional Private Secretary, who is only of the rank of an Under Secretary and is related to the said Shri Ahmed Khan.

(4) Whether contrary to the policy hitherto followed, a provision was deliberately made in the contract to give the right of ownership of the spirit to the said Shri Ahmed Khan until it was delivered to Messrs Mannam Sugar Mills Co-operative Limited and his Payment obtained from them.

(5) Whether the request of Shri Ahmed Khan for a change of route through a circuitous route, via Palghat and Trichur was granted by the Government of Kerala without any justification, with a view to facilitating illegal transportation and sale of unaccounted quantity of spirit in the black market where it would fetch Rs. 30 per litre as against the price of Rs. 3 per litre, at which the said Shri Ahmed Khan was authorised to supply rectified spirit to Messrs Mannam Sugar Mills Co-operative Limited, thereby causing undue pecuniary gain to the said Shri Ahmed Khan and others.

(6) Whether the said Shri Ahmed Khan forged documents to procure rectified spirit from another distillery in Tamil Nadu by name Messrs Vorion Chemicals and Distilleries Limited, Chengalpattu District, whereas the authorisation given to him through Messrs Mannam Sugar Mills Co-operative Limited was to procure it only from Messrs Arvind Distillery and Chemicals Limited of Tamil Nadu.

(7) Whether, making use of the authorisation as well as forging documents, the said Shri Ahmed Khan and his associates procured huge

unaccounted quantities of rectified spirit from Tamil Nadu and diverted the same to unauthorised quarters in Kerala, causing loss of revenue to the tune of Rs. 10 crores to the State Exchequer.

(8) Whether no action was taken when the malpractice was brought to the notice of the Industries Minister, Excise Commissioner, Chairman of Mannam Sugar Mills Cooperative Limited and Special Secretary to the Government of Kerala in the Industries Department by the General Manager of the Mannam Sugar Mills Co-operative Limited.

(9) Whether no action was taken to recover the huge quantity of spirit smuggled into the State of Kerala through six lorry loads, when they were intercepted by the State Excise Authorities on 26th November, 1980 and 27th November, 1980.

SHRI HARINATH MISRA: There are three different Commission which are supported to be functioning namely, the Ray Commission appointed by the Government of India and two other commissions, one appointed by the Government of Tamil Nadu and other appointed by the Government of Kerala. What I would like to know is, how far the terms of reference of the Central Commission overlap with the terms of reference of the two other Commissions and whether the Governments of Tamil Nadu and Kerala are extending full support for the functioning of the Ray Commission appointed by the Union Government.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: In regard to the three Commissions that have been appointed, one by the Government of Kerala and one by the Government of Tamil Nadu and the one appointed by the Central Government under the Commissions of Inquiry Act, there have been certain variations in the terms of reference of these three Commissions.

The terms of reference of the Central Government are with regard to the allegations made from June, 1979 onwards.

But Tamilnadu Enquiry Commission's terms of reference extend to February, 1969, January, 1976, and October-November, 1980.

(2) Allegations against the present Chief Minister of Tamilnadu as Minister-in-charge of Excise:—The Central Government terms of reference contain six allegations whereas in the Tamilnadu Commission of Enquiry, no mention has been made about this specific allegation. So is the case with the Kerala Commission.

(3) Allegations against the former Chief Minister of Tamilnadu Shri Karunanidhi:—There is no such allegation in the terms of reference referred to the Ray Commission whereas Tamilnadu Government have made two specific allegations and Kerala Commission has nothing to do with this.

(4) Allegation against Excise Minister of Kerala:—The Central Commission's jurisdiction covers three allegations against this particular Minister whereas no mention has been made by the Tamilnadu Commission.

(5) Allegations against Shri Ahmed Khan, a private person:—There are two allegations. No mention has been made either in the Tamilnadu Commission or the Kerala Commission.

(6) Large-scale diversion of molasses for illegal manufacture and sale of rectified spirit:—This is one of the terms of reference for enquiry but no mention has been made either in the Kerala or the Tamilnadu Commission.

Other terms cover transactions of an inter-State nature.

About the Tamilnadu Commission, the terms generally cover transactions

in the State of Tamilnadu except for the export of rectified spirit from Tamilnadu to Kerala.

Kerala Commission terms generally cover transaction in the State of Kerala except for the transport of rectified spirit from Tamilnadu to Kerala.

These are the differences that are in the three Commissions and so far as the cooperation that is to be extended, is concerned it is reported in the Press that the Tamilnadu Chief Minister has said that he would extend the necessary cooperation to the Central Enquiry Commission.

With regard to Kerala, the Government of Kerala seems to take the Press more into confidence than the Government of India.

SHRI HARINATH MISRA: Apart from the constitutional aspect according to which only the Central Commission of Enquiry can be allowed to function, is it a fact that the findings of the two Commissions appointed by the two quarrelling States, are most likely to be contradictory and hence a single Commission vested with authority to coordinate investigations from both sides will be able to tackle the job more effectively and expose all those involved in this murky business?

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: Commissions appointed under the Commission of Enquiry Act, 1952, are only fact-finding bodies. The Act itself does not contain any specific provision as to what would happen if the findings of the three Commissions differ from one another. The matter will have to be considered at the appropriate time keeping in view the desirability of follow-up action and the competence of the respective Governments in respect of the various findings of the Commission.

SHRI A. T. PATIL: May I know the extent to which breach of the rules, governing use of molasses for conversion into rectified spirit, potable alcohol and industrial alcohol as raw material, has been committed by the Tamil Nadu and Kerala Governments in terms of percentage of molasses produced and quantities of molasses and rectified spirit diverted? (b) Is there any illegal export of these materials, whether molasses, rectified spirit or industrial alcohol, outside India, and if so, from where and to which places? (c) what is the estimated loss to the State exchequer as estimated by the Government of India?

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: All these matters will be brought before the Inquiry Commission. Members of Parliament made a representation to the Government of India with regard to financial irregularities and also the financial loss that will accrue on account of this so-called spirit scandal. They have said that several crores of rupees have been involved in this scandal and they have listed various allegations against the Chief Minister who is in charge of excise also and also the Kerala Government. With regard to the export of this spirit outside India, so far as Government of India is concerned, we have no such information.

SHRI E. BALANANDAN: According to the reply given by the Minister here, the Commission by the Centre has been appointed on the request of 21 M.Ps. May I know the political affiliations of these MPs? (*Interruptions*) Secondly, I want to know the date of appointment of the Central Commission. Is it not a fact that the Central Commission has been appointed after the appointment of the Commissions by the Kerala State and the Government of Tamil Nadu, and if so, has this not been done with a political, ulterior motive?

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: Members of Parliament are Members

of Parliament, irrespective of their political affiliations. They are people's representatives and they have got every right to bring these allegations to the notice of the Central Government if such irregularities have taken place. I will put it the other way. Anticipating that an Inquiry Commission will be constituted by the Central Government, the Kerala Government might have thought it fit to appoint their own Inquiry Commission to cover up all these irregularities. There is no political motive attached to this.

SHRI C. T. DHANDAPANI: I am one of the signatories to the Memorandum. . .

MR. SPEAKER: Even in neighbourhood you could not tell him?

SHRI C. T. DHANDAPANI: Mr. Balanandan has not signed that Memorandum because he belongs to the Party is involved in this matter. . . scandal.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Don't be more loyal than the King.

SHRI C. T. DHANDAPANI: Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu also might not have signed this Memorandum because his Party is involved in this matter. . . .

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: It is not true. The CPM is not involved in this. . . (*Interruptions*)

SHRI C. T. DHANDAPANI: I am thankful to the Central Government for having constituted the Commission of Inquiry against both the Governments, namely, the AIADMK and the United Front Government—I should call it CPM—Government if it is correct (*Interruptions*). The amount involved is more than Rs. 35 crores. A lady was playing an important role; that lady is called 'Parrot': that 'Parrot' does not live in a forest or in a house; it was living on the shoulders of the Chief Minister (*Interruptions*)

SHRI C. T. DHANDAPANI: A murder also took place in this regard. . .

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: On a point of order, Sir . .
(Interruptions).

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Bosu, no point of order during Question Hour.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: He cannot bring in the name of a Chief Minister here.

SHRI C. T. DHANDAPANI: Just I have said 'Chief Minister'. I have not said Mr. M. G. Ramachandran or Mr. Nayanar.

The Minister has just stated that Tamil Nadu is ready to co-operate with the Ray Commission. But, Sir, things are different in Tamil Nadu. The Tamil Nadu government and the entire Cabinet are making scathing attacks on the Central Government. . .

(Interruptions)

SHRI A. NEELALOHITHADASAN NADAR: Is it a question, Sir?

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: Sir, are you allowing him to make a speech here?

MR. SPEAKER: You cannot go on a wild-goose chase here. Please put your question.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Background.

SHRI C. T. DHANDAPANI: My speech is very much inconvenient to my friend. . .

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Reserve your speech for some other time, now put your question.

SHRI C. T. DHANDAPANI: Both the State Governments of Kerala and Tamil Nadu have appointed two Com-

missions without jurisdiction. Beyond the jurisdiction and constitutional provisions they have appointed two Commissions according to the Industries Development and regulation Act. . .

(Interruptions)

SHRI C. T. DHANDAPANI: . . . with regard to a commodity which comes under the Industries Development and Regulation Act. Therefore, just out of political motive they have constituted a Commission of Inquiry. Just to divert the attention of the people they have constituted two Commissions—one in Kerala and one in Tamil Nadu. . .

(Interruptions)

SHRI C. T. DHANDAPANI: They are not allowing me to put the question.

MR. SPEAKER: You have taken five minutes already. I cannot allow you. Put the question. . . . You are a leader.

SHRI C. T. THANDAPANI: My specific question is: following my previous memorandum, three Members of Parliament gave another memorandum to the Prime Minister as well as the Home Minister. . .

MR. SPEAKER: What is the question, Sir?

SHRI C. T. DHANDAPANT: My question is: another scandal has already taken place, namely, the bottling and blending scandal. Rs. 12 crores is involved in this matter. I would like to ask the Minister. Since the persons involved in this matter. I would like and blending, are the very same persons as are involved in the spirit scandal and they have already been arrested. . . .

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: He has put the question. . . .

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I have told him so many times.... Yes, I have already told him.

SHRI C. T. DHANDAPANI: They have been arrested in the previous case. Therefore, the direct involvement of the persons in this case is there,....

MR. SPEAKER: What is the question then?

SHRI C. T. DHANDAPANI: The direct involvement of the persons in this case is there. Therefore, I would like to ask the Minister whether the terms of reference of the Ray Commission will be expanded to cover also the scandal with regard to bottling and blending of rectified spirit in Tamilnadu and Kerala. That is (a). As far as part (b) is concerned.

MR. SPEAKER: No, no. You are not putting a specific question. You are misusing Too much now. You could have straightaway put the question before. You are taking unnecessary time .No, no.

SHRI C. T. DHANDAPANI: This is the practice of the House, Sir.

In view of all this .

MR. SPEAKER: No, no. Please sit down now

How can I check this?....If the leaders behave like this, how can I control this House?

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Defying the Chair.

SHRI C. T. DHANDAPANI: In view of the Supreme Court judgment, any allegation made against a particular Ministry....

MR. SPEAKER: I do not know why you are not putting the question.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: No question at all.

MR. SPEAKER: He is haranguing all the time without putting the questions.

SHRI C. T. DHANDAPANI: How can I put the questions? Sir, the Supreme Court gave a categorical judgment. Because the allegations have been levelled, this Commission has been constituted. So, it is a moral obligation on the part of the concerned State Ministries to resign till the Central Government comes to a decision on the findings of the Commission.

MR. SPEAKER: You could have put the simple question within two minutes. You have take more than five minutes. I would like the Members to cooperate with me.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: Mr. Speaker, I had expected that the hon. Members hailing from and belonging to the C.P.M. Party would have welcomed the Commission that has been set up by the Central Government.

MR. SPEAKER: You reply to Mr. Dhandapani's question.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: Sir, Shri Dhandapani has requested that the Ray Commission may also be asked to enquire into a matter relating to the deal allegedly entered into by the Chief Minister of Tamilnadu regarding grant of monopoly licences for bottling of arrack. He has also requested the Central Government to have a C.B.I. probe into the blending and bottling of arrack allegations.

We had asked for the comments from the Tamilnadu Government also. Shri Dhandapani has made certain observations regarding Grover Commission. All these facts will be borne in mind by the Government at the appropriate time. (Interruptions)

SHRI ERA ANBARASU: Mr. Speaker, Sir, why not the Ray Commission be asked to go into the allegations of the bottling and blending allegation also? This involved nearly twelve crores of rupees. After all, the terms of reference has not yet been finalised.

In view of this, the Ray Commission may be asked to enquire into this allegation also.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: Sir, this has been brought out in a memorandum by Shri Dhandapani and others. Shri Anbarasu also has raised the same question. I have said that we have called for the comments from the Government of Tamilnadu. The other matters which the hon. Member mentioned now will receive due consideration by the Government of India.

SHRI B. K. NAIR: Sir, earlier, the Government of Kerala had been denying that there was anything to enquire into the spirit scandal allegation. But later there was pressure from the public as well as from Parliament. They ultimately yielded to appoint a Commission of Inquiry. They knew that ultimately the Central Government would appoint a Commission. In view of this I want to know whether the Central Government would advise the State Governments of Tamilnadu and Kerala to give up their experiments of setting up the two Commissions—Sadasivam and Sadasivam Commissions—just to protect the good names of the Ministers concerned and agree to withdraw their Commissions and allow the Central Commission to go ahead with the enquiry into the allegation involving thirty crores of rupees in so far as Kerala Government is concerned?

MR. SPEAKER: What are you trying to do?

Have you followed him?

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: He wanted to know whether we could advise the Governments....

MR. SPEAKER: I could not follow anything.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: Whatever he said we shall convey to the respective State Governments.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: Sir, in view of the reply given by the Minister a little while ago which said that the Kerala Government appointed this Commission in order to pre-empt the setting up of a Commission by the Central Government may I know whether after this event occurred the Central Government was aware of it and whether since Kerala Government at once and promptly appointed the Commission the Central Government set-up another Commission in order to complicate the matter with political motivation?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No. No.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: The Central Government which was aware of it earlier did not think it necessary to set up the Commission earlier.

Secondly, since the Minister said that Members of Parliament are just Members of Parliament ..

MR. SPEAKER: Don't put words in his mouth.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: Or he implied that it did not matter very much who belonged to which political party. May I know in view of this thing in the coming debate on the Maintenance of Essential Services Bill his party MPs will have the right of conscience vote?

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: The Kerala Government has not promptly appointed the Commission but was prompted to appoint the Commission.

Sir, there are two Sadasivams. One is Sadasivan and the other is Sadasivam. Previously there was one Kalliasam in Tamil Nadu and he was replaced by Sadasivam. In Kerala there is Sadasivam. Both are Sadasivams. (Interruptions) Sir, I strongly repudiate the allegation made by the hon. Member, that it is politically motivated. It is not like this. I did not say Members of Parliament are Members of Parliament in their own right. They have made allegations—grave allega-

tions—and the proof of it is that the State Government themselves have appointed a Commission. What more proof do they require? They themselves have appointed the Commission. That means the allegations made are very serious. So, there is nothing unconstitutional to have appointed this Commission.

U.S. Pak deal regarding Bombers and Tank

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*48. SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA:

SHRI JANARDHANA
POOJARY:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether USA deal with Pakistan about F 16 Bombers, anti tank weaponry and other sophisticated weapons has been finalised or is going to be finalised;

(b) if so, details thereabout;

(c) whether these are weapons of superior aggressive character not possessed by India or any other country of south or south-east Asia; and

(d) if so, what steps are being taken to ensure peace and stability in the area and the defence of India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL): (a) and (b). The arms deal between USA and Pakistan is reported to be still under negotiation. The deal is reported to cover, among others, the supply of tanks, armoured personnel carriers, aircraft, helicopters, artillery and air defence systems, in addition to some anti-tank weapons, Destroyers and Naval Missiles.

(c) and (d). These weapons are very sophisticated and have better operational characteristics than currently available in the region. Government monitor all developments having a bearing on our security and initiate

appropriate measures from time to time to ensure full defence preparedness at all times.

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA: After this question was tabled by me, it has been stated that the United States Under Secretary for Defence has made a statement. In that statement he has declared that Pakistan would be supplied with F-16 and other bombers. I want to know whether the bombers and the tanks, about 300 of them repaired recently, have arrived from Turkey to Pakistan. They have been made in USA and they have been repaired with the help of USA though in Turkey. There are about 600 of such tanks in all. I want to know whether these tanks and F-16 bombers are not of aggressive and offensive categories. They cannot be used by Pakistan either in the North or in the West or in the sea in the South, but only in the East, that is, against India only. In view of this situation, I would like the hon. Minister to take this House and the country into confidence and tell us to what extent and in which form we are ensuring our defence against possible aggression with the help of these sophisticated weapons.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: As far as the question relating to Tanks is concerned, we have seen some Press Reports to that effect. As far as the question of utilisation of these Tanks and aircrafts are concerned, they can be used in any direction. But the question is whether they would be used against East or West or North or South; and this question can be decided by taking into consideration the historical facts and we can draw our own conclusions. Now, the third part of his question relates to our preparedness. I have already stated that we are alert and we are active and we are taking all steps that are necessary to safeguard and protect our interests and our sovereignty.

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA: The Minister while replying forgets the topography. He says that the Tanks can be used in any direction. I don't know