

robbery which took place on the 31st May, 1971 in the Punjab National Bank, New Delhi, has been completed ; and

(b) if so, the findings thereof and the action taken against the culprits ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI K. C. PANT) : (a) The investigation of the case is still in progress.

(b) Does not arise.

Purchase of Rubber by S.T.C.

*682. **SHRI C. M. STEPHEN :** Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) the total quantity of rubber purchased by the State Trading Corporation through its agencies in Kerala during the year 1970-71 as also the percentage thereof in relation to the total quantity offered for sale :

(b) whether the State Trading Corporation will purchase rubber from individual producers and, if not, the reasons therefor ; and

(c) whether his Ministry is aware that the manufacturers are not purchasing rubber at the prescribed price from the producers and whether the Ministry contemplates the grant of permission to export rubber in view of the need to keep up market price to the prescribed level ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI A. C. GEORGE) : (a) and (b). The State Trading Corporation entered the rubber market in October, 1970 to effect purchase of raw rubber RMA Grade I to V and purchased 6,000 tonnes of rubber during 1970-71 from the co-operative societies of small growers and service co-operatives. Total quantity available for sale for the period October, 1970 to 31st March, 1971 in the market is not available.

(c) Government have not received any specific complaint against the manufacturers purchasing rubber below the notified prices. The possibility of export of rubber also is being explored.

Import of Aluminium Goods from Nepal

*683. **SHRI B. R. SHUKLA :** Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any articles of aluminium, manufactured in Nepal, are imported into India ;

(b) if so, the extent of annual import ; and

(c) whether aluminium is being exported to Nepal from India ?

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI L. N. MISHRA) : (a) Upto December 31, 1970, there were no restriction on import of aluminium manufactures from Nepal into India. However, according to the available information, there have been no import of aluminium manufactures from Nepal during 1968-69, 1969-70 and April-December, 1970.

(b) Does not arise

(c) Yes, Sir.

Central Assistance for Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority

*686. **SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE :** Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state :

(a) the amount of Central assistance decided to be given to the Government of West Bengal for the Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority upto the end of the Fourth Five Year Plan ; and

(b) the schemes for which such assistance has been given ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI MOHAN DHARIA) : (a) and (b). Central assistance for States' Fourth Five Year Plans is being allocated in the form of block loans and block grants in accordance with an objective formula evolved by the Chief Ministers' Committee of the National Development Council. Its allocation is not linked with any specific schemes or programmes adopted in the plan by a State Government for its rural, urban or metropolitan areas. West Bengal has been allocated a Central assistance of Rs. 221 crores for its Fourth Five Year Plan of Rs. 322.50 crores.

In addition to the Central assistance for West Bengal's Fourth Five Year Plan, it is proposed to provide Central grant upto Rs. 8 crores outside the plan during the Fourth Plan period for Bustec Improvement schemes in the Calcutta Metropolitan Region.

All India Radio Station at Quilon

*687 SHRIMATI BHARGAVI THAN-KAPPAN : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are considering any proposal to set up a Radio Station at Quilon during the Fourth Plan period ;

(b) if so, the funds allocated for this scheme ; and

(c) if the reply to part (a) above be in the negative, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The area which the station in Quilon could serve will be covered by the high power transmitter in Alleppey which will be commissioned shortly.

Proposal to Develop Regional Co-operation in Asia

*688. SHRI H. M. PATIL : Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) the names of Indian goods the trade in respect of which has been affected with the formation of groups like R.C.D., A.S.E.A.N. and S.E.A.M.I.C. and support to these groups from certain developed countries and some international organisations ;

(b) whether Government propose to organise and develop regional co-operation in Asia on that basis ; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government in this direction and the results achieved ?

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI L. N. MISHRA) : (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House,

Statement

The RCD, ASEAM, and SEAMIC which are sub-regional groups, were established primarily to promote economic development, social progress and cultural development among the member countries through mutual cooperation. While these sub-regional groupings are continuing to discuss measures for trade liberalization and expansion among their respective members, no concrete scheme in this field has been evolved as yet. Indian exports to countries belonging to these sub-regional groupings have continued to increase. The Government of India have maintained at various ECAFE meetings that sub-regional groupings should not be insular or "inward looking" in character and that the ultimate aim should be to develop regional co-operation on as broad a basis as possible in accordance with the guidelines set by the Council of Ministers first at their meeting in December 1968 at Bangkok, and subsequently in December 1970 at Kabul. The Resolution on the Strategy for integrated Development of Regional Cooperation in Asia adopted by the Asian Ministers in December 1968 provides a broad framework for the promotion of regional cooperation in Asia to cover all the countries in the ECAFE region. The Government of India continue to play an important role in the forum of ECAFE in implementing the strategy for development of regional economic co-operation.

Export of Rubber

*689. SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPA : Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government intend to take immediate steps for the promotion of export of Rubber ; and

(b) whether any other method is contemplated in view of the sharp fall in Rubber prices, to provide fair price to the Rubber growers ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI A. C. GEORGE) : (a) Possibilities of exporting rubber is being explored.

(b) The State Trading Corporation propose to increase their purchases of raw rubber and this is expected to provide fair prices to the rubber growers.