

Government and asked for a joint enquiry into the incident by the two District Magistrates concerned, and for payment of compensation to the injured.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** Is it true that on the other side of the Indian border, a strip of Pakistan measuring ten miles is being denuded of these tribal people, and they are forced to leave Pakistan territory and come to India?

**Shri Anil K. Chanda:** We have no information.

#### TEA INDUSTRY

\*14. **Shri A. C. Guha:** (a) Will the Minister of **Commerce and Industry** be pleased to refer to the reply to the Short Notice Question answered on the 26th November, 1952 regarding the crisis in tea industry and state whether Government have further reviewed the case of tea industry in India?

(b) Have any further steps been taken to give relief to the tea industry?

(c) Has there been any improvement in the market conditions of Indian tea?

(d) Do Government propose to take any further step in this matter?

**The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari):** (a) to (d). Since I made a statement in reply to a short notice question on the 26th November 1952, Government have been giving continuous consideration to the problems of the tea industry. I stated then that efforts would be made to facilitate credit to tea gardens. A system of guarantees to **Scheduled and Apex co-operative banks** with a view to induce them to extend credit facilities during the 1953-54 season was worked out and announced in a Notification issued by the Finance Ministry on the 27th December last which hon. Members would have seen. It is too early yet to make a full assessment of the effects of these guarantees.

Government also announced an exemption from Excise Duty on what is known as "tea waste" in the hope that this would result in some relief to producers of poorer quality tea. It was, however, found that immediate relief would be more than counterbalanced by a tendency to depress the prices of all teas further by admixture of tea waste and consequent deterioration in quality. The exemption was, therefore, withdrawn in January and

the industry as a whole welcomed this withdrawal. Some of the recommendations of the official team as well as the problems of the industry were reviewed by the Industrial Committee on Plantations which met in Calcutta on the 19th and 20th December last. The employers and labour together recommended the appointment of a Tripartite Commission to go into the cost structure of the tea industry. Government agree that such a thorough investigation is necessary but consider that such an enquiry could be more usefully undertaken by an expert committee and they have, therefore, decided to appoint an expert committee with very wide terms of reference. The Committee will include a person with intimate knowledge of labour problems.

The Central Government have been in consultation with the State Governments in regard to supply of foodgrains to tea gardens. I am glad to say that some assistance has already been given both by the West Bengal and Assam Governments and I hope that even more satisfactory arrangements will be made shortly. The question of conversion of foodgrain concessions is mainly a matter for direct negotiations between employers and labour. The Tripartite Committee on Plantations is scheduled to meet towards the end of this month to resolve this problem.

Since the beginning of this year, there has been improvement in the prices of tea as well as in demand. In London auctions, the price for Northern Indian teas has gone up from 31 d. on 18th December to 38.04 d. on 5th of February 1953. In the Calcutta auctions the price has gone up from Re. 0-15-11 on the 8th December to Rs. 1-5-6 on the 27th January.

Some of the tea gardens which have given notice of closure have not actually closed and some gardens which had been closed have re-opened. The number of gardens closed today is 107 as against 124 a fortnight ago.

Since our withdrawal from the International Tea Marketing Expansion Board, the hon. Members were rather exercised as to how India was going to conduct propaganda in other countries. A senior officer of the Government of India was deputed to the U. S. A. and I am glad to inform the hon. Members that an agreement, subject to the ratification by the respective countries, has been arrived at between India, Ceylon, Indonesia and the U. S. tea trade. The same officer has

visited several other countries to explore whether similar or other suitable arrangements for propaganda can be made.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** Is it true that the credit facilities which were announced by the Government took a long time to reach the affected tea gardens?

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** I have no information.

**Shri R. K. Chaudhuri:** Is it a fact that the guarantee which has been given now only applies to the working expenses for the year 1953? If so, what arrangements have been made to meet the liabilities which were created on account of this slump in 1952?

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** The credit facilities are based on the credit given to these tea estates in 1952 and the amount returned by them. Whether the basis will be on the working expenses or on some other needs of the tea gardens I am not aware.

**Shri Nambiar:** May I know, Sir, how many thousands of workers are rendered unemployed due to the closure of tea gardens recently as stated by the Minister?

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** I would like to have notice.

**Shri H. N. Mukerjee:** Has the attention of Government been drawn to the fact that in defiance of the tripartite agreement which was entered into at Calcutta two months ago, the West Bengal Government has permitted the employers to reduce the wages of the workers?

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** I do not think any agreement was entered into at that tripartite conference at Calcutta.

**Shri Sarmah:** Were the Government of India consulted by the Government of Assam before passing the recent orders cutting drastically the wages of the labourers in a section of tea estates?

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** The responsibility of looking after the estates is that of the State Government. There is no need for them to consult the Central Government.

**Shri Sarmah:** Are the Government aware that there has been a drastic wage cut of the labourers in a section of the tea gardens in Assam by the recent orders of the Government of Assam?

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** I have no official communication from the Government of Assam.

**Shri H. N. Mukerjee:** Am I to understand from the reply which the Minister gave to my supplementary question that the reports which appeared all over the press in regard to certain agreed decisions of the tripartite conference are all baseless?

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** The hon. Member will understand that an agreement in a tripartite conference must mean agreement between the three parties that go to make the tripartite conference. No such agreement was entered into.

**Shri R. K. Chaudhuri:** May I know how many estates have actually availed themselves of the guarantee which has been given?

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** I have not got any information yet. As soon as I get the information, I will give it to the hon. Member.

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:** May we know if the question of granting subsidised food to the tea garden labourers by the employers has also been considered?

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** Again, it is a matter for the State Government, whether they are in a position to supply them foodgrains at controlled rates. I believe the West Bengal Government and the Assam Government are now engaged in negotiations with the interests concerned in this matter.

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:** It is not a question of controlled rates, but subsidised rate which is Rs. 5 a maund. The controlled rate is much higher.

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** That is obviously so. The subsidised rate must be lower than the controlled rate. Otherwise, there will be no need for subsidy.

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:** That is the question I asked.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The hon. Minister has already stated that it is the concern of the State Government.

**Shri V. P. Nayar:** In regard to the agreement between Ceylon, U. S. and India which the hon. Minister referred to just now, may I ask whether it is a fact that the Government contemplate financing an American propaganda organization for exclusive propaganda for Indian tea in the U.S.A.?

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** The agreement arrived at is for the purpose of doing propaganda for tea—not for Indian tea as such, and it is the intention of the Government to approve of the Central Tea Board participating in this campaign and provide the necessary amount of finance as has been agreed upon.

**Shri V. P. Nayar:** May I know what will be the amount, and whether the propoganda to be conducted would be exclusively for the U.S.A.?

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** Yes, Sir. This is a matter entirely intended for the U.S.A. The agreement is with the tea trade in the U.S.A.

#### ASIAN FILM SOCIETY

\*15. **Shri S. C. Samanta:** Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that an Asian Film Society has been launched by Indian and Pakistan students in London;

(b) whether Government have contacted this Society for Indian films to be exhibited by them; and

(c) if not, whether this Society has approached the Government of India for lending them films to be exhibited by them?

**The Deputy Minister of External Affairs (Shri Anil K. Chanda):** (a) Yes.

(b) No.

(c) Yes. The Society borrowed two documentary films from our High Commission in London in September, 1952.

**Shri S. C. Samanta:** May I know what the objects of this Society are?

**Shri Anil K. Chanda:** Presumably to show some eastern films in England, but we have not here any detailed information about the objects and aims of that Society.

**Shri S. C. Samanta:** Are students from other Asian countries also participating in this Society?

**The Prime Minister (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru):** The Society, according to the information we have, is called the Asian Film Society. It was inaugurated in London in December last, just two or three months ago. And so far as I know, only Indian and Pakistani students are connected with it, though presumably it is open to others too to join. It is a small society for special films to be shown at.

**Shri S. C. Samanta:** May I know whether this Society has any future programmes for the exhibition of Indian films?

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** We are not the agents of that Society. It is a private society. The hon. Member can write direct to the Society and find out.

**Shri K. K. Basu:** May I know what are the two documentary films which they have exhibited in London?

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** They showed two films—'Taqdeer' and 'Dr. Kotnis'.

**Shri S. C. Samanta:** I wanted to know whether any future programmes have been drafted by this Society, and whether the Indian Government have been asked to supply those films?

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** The Indian Government has absolutely nothing to do with that Society.

#### GOOD OFFICES COMMISSION ON TREATMENT OF INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

\*16. **Shri S. N. Das:** Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

(a) whether and if so, what steps have so far been taken by the Good Offices Commission on the treatment of people of Indian origin in South Africa to arrange negotiations between South Africa, India and Pakistan;

(b) the nature of correspondence that has so far been carried on between the Government of India and the said Commission; and

(c) whether the Commission has drawn up any plan of its work?

**The Deputy Minister of External Affairs (Shri Anil K. Chanda):** (a) to (c). After the announcement made on the 21st December, 1952, by the President of the General Assembly that the U. N. Good Offices Commission will be composed of the representatives of Syria, Yugoslavia and Cuba, there has been little progress in regard to the constitution of the Commission. It is understood that the Secretary General of the United Nations has approached these three Governments requesting them to nominate their representatives.

**Shri S. N. Das:** May I know whether it is a fact that since the passing of the resolution by the United Nations General Assembly, the Government of South Africa, instead of suspending the operation of the Group Areas Act, have intensified the operations, and as a result, a large number of persons of Indian origin have been affected?

**Shri Anil K. Chanda:** Yes.

**Shri S. N. Das:** May I know whether it is a fact that the Government of South Africa have decided to cancel the concessions that were granted to the persons of Indian origin, as a result of the Gandhi-Smuts Pact?