

[श्री राम विलास पासवान]

के सम्बन्ध में तो कुछ कहें, उस पर बातचीत हो गई है, उस पर विचार होना चाहिए।

12.14 hrs.

SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (GENERAL). 1982-83.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : I beg to present a statement (Hindi and English versions) showing supplementary Demands for Grants in respect of the Budget (General) for 1982-83.

12.15 hrs.

ANDHRA SCIENTIFIC COMPANY LTD. (ACQUISITION AND TRANSFER OF UNDERTAKINGS) BILL.*

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND WORKS AND HOUSING) SHRI BHISHMA NARAIN SINGH) : On Behalf of Shri R. Venkataraman I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the acquisition and transfer of the undertakings of the Andhra Scientific Company Limited with a view to securing the proper management of such undertakings so as to subserve the interests of the general public by ensuring the continuity of production of scientific instruments which are vital to the needs of the country and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the acquisition and transfer of the undertakings of the Andhra Scientific Company Limited, with a view to securing the proper management of such undertakings so as to subserve the interests of the general public by ensuring the continuity of production of scientific instruments which are vital to the needs of the country and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto."

The motion was adopted

SHRI BHISMA NARAIN SINGH : I introduce** the Bill.

CENTRAL EXCISE LAWS (AMENDMENT AND VALIDATION) BILL*

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the amendment of laws relating to Central Excise and to validate duties of excise collected under such laws.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the amendment of laws relating to Central excise and to validate duties of excise collected under such laws."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: I introduce @ the Bill.

12.16 hrs.

STATEMENT RE: CENTRAL EXCISE LAWS (AMENDMENT AND VALIDATION) ORDINANCE, 1982

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : I beg to lay on the Table an explanatory statement (Hindi and English versions) giving reasons for immediate legislation by the Central Excise Laws (Amendment and Validation) Ordinance, 1982.

RUBBER (AMENDMENT) BILL— *contd.*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House will now take up further consideration of the following motion moved by Shri Shivraj V. Patil on the 13th October, 1982, namely :

"That the Bill further to amend the Rubber Act, 1947, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

There are two speakers—Mr. N. Dennis and Mr. Banatwalla. They will take five minutes each. Then the Minister will reply. Mr. Mool Chand Daga was on his legs. He is not present in the House. His time will be taken by Mr. Dennis.

*Published in Gazette of India Extraordinary Part II, Section-dated 16-10-82.

**Introduced with the recommendadation of the President.

@Introduced with the recommendation of the President.

SHRI N. DENNIS (Nagercoil): The amendment is to enable the appointment of a part-time Chairman and a full time Executive Director. So far only full time Chairman has been appointed. For full time jobs, generally high Government employees such as IAS officers are appointed.

To make avail of the services of persons of high reputation, long standing experience in rubber plantation and to utilise their services and their practical knowledge and experience and to facilitate them to make substantial contributions for the development of rubber—this amendment is intended. Men of such talent may not like to offer their services as full time Chairman. They may like to serve as part time Chairman. In such an event, the services of a full time Government officer is necessitated to carry on the day to-day administration and for the transaction of work effectively. The matters prescribed or delegated to him would be executed by him on behalf of the Chairman. The question of the appointment of full time Executive Director would come up only when a part-time Chairman is appointed. The points to be taken into consideration are :—

1. So far no difficulty is expressed or pointed out or experienced by the Board in the functioning of the Rubber Board. This change should not create complications, troubles and confrontations in the administrative set up.

2. By this amendment a high post is created—full time Executive Director. There is a similar post of Secretary to the Board apart from another post of Rubber Production Commissioner. The post of Rubber Commissioner could be mainly rendering technical assistance and also to carry on research work. But side by side with the proposed post of Executive Director, there is a Secretary to the Board. There should not be duplicity and overlapping of work in the transaction of their respective duties. There should be a clear cut demarcation and definition of their respective duties, for the smooth and harmonious functioning of the Board.

Rubber has now become a crucial commodity and it is widely used. In the national interest and in the interest of our economy, as also in the interest of preserving and improving the foreign exchange position, as it is a foreign exchange earning commodity, and for protecting and safeguarding the labourers, rubber growers, and the small farmers depending on rubber plantation, it is highly essential to increase the production more and more by intensive and extensive cultivation in the traditional and also in the non-traditional areas.

SHRI E. BALANANDAN (Mukandapuram): Do you want a part time Director ?

SHRIMATI SUSEELA GOPALAN (Allepey): Part time Chairman and full time Executive Director are proposed.

SHRI N. DENNIS: On this question I would like to say that if an official is appointed there would be criticism that bureaucrats are ruling the country; but when a part-time non-official is appointed there would be criticism that there are politics. So there would be criticism, in any event.

After the formation of the Board there is considerable improvement in the production of rubber. In the last 20 years rubber production has increased from 20,000 tonnes to 1,50,000 tonnes. The area of production has also increased during the period of these 30 years from 63,000 hectares to 2,77,000 hectares. The production per hectare also has considerably increased. It has gone up from 234 kilogrammes to 800 kilogrammes. These improvements are due to the successful research work and other steps taken by the Government and Rubber Board. It has to be intensified in such a way as to make it export-oriented. For the last three years there is stagnation in the production of rubber and the production is to the tune of about 1,50,000 tonnes. The reason is, the cost of production per kilogramme in India is about Rs. 16 in the rubber-producing areas of Kerala, including Kanya Kumari District there.

There is a disease called Pythothena, falling of leaves during the monsoon season. When this disease effects the plants, there is an additional expenditure for spraying. Previously, a subsidy was given by the Government. For the past three years that subsidy is not being given. For reducing the cost of production subsidy should be given to the growers.

As per the present Act, there is a Pool Fund. Now this is being used for the development of rubber plantation. But it can be used for spraying also.

In Sri Lanka and Malaysia, the cost of production is only about Rs. 7 or 8 the leaf falling disease is not there. But import of rubber would effect our production. Moreover, after terminal tax and other expenses, the import per kg. of rubber would come to Rs. 12 to Rs. 13. So, import is not the solution and stepping up the production is the only solution.

Another important problem that has to be tackled is regarding the conflicting representations presented by the rubber growers on the one hand and the manufacturers on the other. Rubber growers

[Shri N. Dennis]

demand ban or restriction on imports. Manufacturers demand for more imports to suit their needs. So, conflicting claims and figures are made by them to suit their trades. Regarding requirement and production also, inflated and deflated figures are given. The gap between the demand and supply, according to official figures, appears to be 35,000 tonnes. So, a decision for import or restriction or ban has to be taken cautiously to protect the growers on the one side and the manufacturers on the other. Following points may be taken into consideration in this connection :

The quantity of import could be fixed by a dialogue between the growers and the manufacturers and also by having a joint meeting of the representatives of the Government, manufacturers and the growers.

A Committee of technical experts could also be appointed to go into the quantity of rubber that has to be imported.

Disproportionate import of rubber would affect the price. If the price is low, the growers would not take interest in production. So, production would be affected adversely by such disproportionate import of rubber.

When there is an import of rubber, the price goes down. With the result, growers lose interest in production. That would affect our national interest also.

A clear decision has to be taken regarding the quantity to be imported.

Regarding the development of rubber, following points can be taken into consideration :

Production has to be increased by intensive, extensive and scientific cultivation. The area of cultivation has to be increased. Now, rubber is cultivated only in South. But there are other areas in North where rubber can be cultivated. A survey should be conducted to find out the possibility and scope of rubber cultivation in other areas, so that the area of cultivation can be increased.

Subsidies, loans and grants also could be given liberally for greater production of this commodity which earns foreign exchange to the country.

The cost of production must be brought down. In Malayasia and Sri Lanka, the cost of production is about Rs. 7 or 8 per kg. So, subsidized spraying has to be done in an intensive way.

Rubber has to be developed in such a way as to make it export-oriented. The condition of labour, who depend on the rubber industry, has to be improved.

In order to meet the growing needs of the rubber industry, the producers need some concrete incentives for increased production of rubber.

So far as per acre or unit production is concerned, Kanyakumari district stands first in our country. Qualitatively also it occupies the highest place in our country. At present, there is only a sub-office at Nagercoil. I would like to suggest that a regional office should be opened in Kanyakumari district to ensure increased production and intensive cultivation of rubber in that area, which is considered to be the best in all respects in the country.

The examination of soil testing, which is provided in other parts has to be extended to Kanyakumari district also.

With these words, I support the Bill.

SHRI G. M. BANATWALLA (Ponnani): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, the Bill reflects the concern of the Government to deal effectively with the problems relating to the development of rubber. The Bill provides for the appointment of the Chairman of the Rubber Board, even on a part-time basis. It has been realised in both the public as well as private sector that there are persons who have distinguished themselves in the field of rubber plantations. They may not be available as the Chairman of the Rubber Board on a whole-time basis. But it is indeed desirable to have the advantage of their experience, their knowledge and their talent. Therefore, provision has been made in this Bill to have even a part-time Chairman for the Board. So, I say that the underlying object and the sentiments are most welcome. As such, I support the Bill.

However, I must point out an important statement made in the Statement of Objects and Reasons:

“However, such persons may not always be available for serving the Board as Chairman on a whole-time basis.”

When it has been realised that such persons may not always be available to serve on a whole-time basis, then the Hon. Minister should assure this House that a part-time Chairman would be appointed only when it is not possible to have a distinguished personality as the Chairman of the Board on a whole-time basis. This assurance must logically follow. A part-time Chairman, having interest elsewhere also in the field, may

not be a wholly satisfactory solution. Therefore, I must emphasize upon the Government that the appointment of a part-time Chairman should be only an exception, when a whole-time Chairman is not available.

Secondly, I must also point out that there should be no political appointments. I am saying this because there are genuine apprehensions in certain quarters that there would be political appointments. There are certain quarters, who are helpless; the yalways smell rat everywhere. So, we cannot help them. But, at the same time, Government should see that no political appointments as such are made.

Sir, I have to emphasise one point and that is that the need is to augment the production of rubber. But, while we are stressing the need for augmenting the production of rubber, the policy on the part of the Government is a defeatist policy I should say. They are planning for deficiency in the production of rubber. For example, the Sixth Five Year Plan has a target of 2 lakh tonnes per year. The Rubber Board estimates that the demand per year is 2.37 lakhs. Thus, even the Sixth Five Year Plan is planning for deficiency in production as compared to the demand, a deficiency of nearly 37,000 tonnes per year. I must, therefore, emphasise that every effort should be made in order to augment production. Let us boost up our programmes for the replantation and new plantations as well. The programme of 30,000 hectares a year of replantation and 30,000 hectares a year of new plantation, I must therefore emphasise, should be taken up further ahead so that such deficiencies are at least not planned.

When I say that there should be augmentation of production, the unfortunate scene that is prevalent is that there is confusion with respect to even the requirement of rubber and the total quantity of rubber that is produced. Different agencies give us different figures. Sir, I would draw your attention to the following figures of estimates of demand and production for the year 1982-83 given by different agencies. They are as follows:—

Rubber Boards estimate for 1982-83 is:

Demand	1.97 lakh tonnes
Production	1.62 lakh tonnes.
Deficit	30,000 tonnes.

Then we have the Director General of Technical Development. His estimate of demand for 1982-83 is 2 lakh tonnes, production 1.55 lakh tonnes resulting in a deficit of 45,000 tonnes.

Then we have the Rubber Industry Association. They say that the demand is estimated at 2.2 lakh tonnes, the production is estimated at 1.15 lakh tonnes. Consequently, they say that there will be a deficiency of 65,000 tonnes during the year 1982-83.

We have also the estimates of the Rubber Growers' Association. They pointed out that the demand would be 1.8 lakh tonnes, the production would be 1.76 lakh tonnes, so that there would be almost no deficit whatsoever during the present year.

Therefore, I say that proper vigilance is necessary. After all, what would be the production and all that? The rubber growers have to be taken into confidence and a dialogue must be there.

Sir, while we are considering this question of augmenting the production of rubber, we must also correct our policy with respect to the import of rubber. This import of rubber is creating a havoc. Kerala is a State that produces the maximum quantity of rubber in our country. It is 90 per cent, and the import of rubber has shattered the economy of Kerala. Not only that. But you will be shocked to know that from this import, the bulk release, was made in the internal market out of these imports and then the rubber was released at a time when the internal production of rubber was at its peak level. There was, therefore, a glut in the market and as a result we had a very adverse consequence upon the prices. There was a sudden decline in the price from about Rs. 16/- to Rs. 10.50 per kg. You can imagine the havoc that it creates without problems. The uneconomic price effects have several other things. A guarantee of proper economic price should be given at least for a period of four to five years for a stable price because the production of rubber takes time and, therefore, it is necessary that stability in prices should be offered. I must, therefore, urge upon this Government to do away with its policy of importing the rubber. The Finance Minister of Kerala Shri Mani has given at least one important suggestion i.e. in the case of imports at least the producer states must be consulted before these imports are done. I hope and I am sure that the Government in this matter of import of rubber which is shattering the economy of Kerala will at least take the Government of Kerala into confidence, discuss the matters with them, discuss the matters with the rubber growers over there and then come to this conclusion. I am sure the fair conclusion in the interest of augmenting production even of rubber would be, to abandon and jettison this policy of import of rubber.

[Shri G. M. Banatwalla]

With these words I support the Bill. I welcome the concern of the Government for dealing with the problems relating to the development. But let the Government realise that by merely appointing part time and full time Chairman and full time Executive Director, the problem will not be solved. One has to come to grips with the problem in consultation with the major producer States of our country.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL): I am thankful to the hon. Members who have participated in this debate and have given some valuable suggestions.

At the outset I would like to assure them that all the suggestions that are given by them will be examined very carefully and we would certainly like to make use of them.

The debate on this Bill has stretched over four or five days continuously. Of course, we are considering Rubber (Amendment) Bill and like rubber the debate has also even stretched.

A very relevant point has been made by some hon. Members. They have said that there would be conflict between the Chairman and the Executive Director if the Chairman happens to come from outside the services and if he is a part timer. They have also said that the powers that would be available to the Executive Director will be vague and it would be impossible or it will not be possible for the Executive Director to implement the resolutions passed by the Board in a proper manner. Of course, this is a germane point but the hon. Members should not have any apprehension on this count. The Chairman will be a person who would understand as to how the rubber is grown, as to how the production has to be increased, as to what are the market trends, as to how the industry deals with this and all those things. He would represent the views of the growers. So if he is sitting there as a Chairman, he would be able to protect the interests of the growers and others also. But at times, it becomes difficult for us to have a full time chairman on the Board. For the implementation of the decisions taken in the Board, there should be an executive officer or an executive director. So, we are providing for the Executive Officer.

The Bill provides that the powers that would be available to the Executive Director will be prescribed. There is no ambiguity on this point. If the powers are prescribed by the Government, there

cannot be any ambiguity. At the same time, the Bill says that the powers may be delegated by the Chairman. If the powers are prescribed, there would not be any difficulty in knowing the spheres in which the Executive Director will be working and the Chairman will be working. In certain other Corporations and Boards, we do have part-time chairmen as well as full-time chairmen and the Executive Directors. There has not been any conflict. So, I think, we need not be apprehensive on this count.

Mr. Banatwalla, in his very forceful and very good speech, has told us that we should try to see that political considerations are not taken into account while appointing the chairman. Well, we would like to see that this Rubber Board prospers. We would like to see that the feelings of the growers and others concerned are also truly represented in the Board and only after seeing man of that kind, a man of that nature who can really protect the interests of the Board is appointed. We will keep all these things in view.

Second point relates to the import of rubber. Sir, almost all Members from both the sides have spoken on that point. It has become necessary for me to express the views of the Government on that point, though that point is not really germane to the amendment discussed here. The question is to what quantity should be imported is decided not by an individual but by a committee. That committee consists of the Chairman of the Rubber Board himself and the representatives of the Commerce Ministry and the Industries Ministry and the representatives from the Directorate General of Technical Development. They assess the production of rubber, they try to find out as to what would be the demand and then they suggest as to what quantity should be imported. Generally, and I would say invariably, the decisions given by them are followed by us.

Now, there is suggestion by one of the Members who spoke on this point on the previous day that sometime the figures relating to the production is deflated and the figures relating to the requirements are inflated. So, there is a big gap and that causes difficulties to the growers. Now, we shall try to collect the figures in a more scientific manner and we shall try to collect the figures in an accurate manner. It will be very difficult for me to say at this time as to how it should be done.

SHRIMATI SUSHEELA GOPALAN: Why can't you have a committee to

assess the requirements of rubber ? This is the long standing demand of the growers.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: That is exactly, I have said, Madam. Now, here is the Rubber Board. In the Rubber Board, the rubber growers, workers and other peoples representatives is sitting. The representative of the Rubber Board or the Chairman of the Rubber Board sits in the Committee which decides as to how much should be imported. We reflects the views.....

(Interruptions)

It is exactly for this reason that we are going to have a part-time.....

(Interruptions)

Please understand. Up to this time, generally we used to appoint an Administrator. But now, we want to have a representative of the growers and a representative of the other sections also. But he may not be willing to work there a full-time worker. So, we are going to have as part-time Chairman and that part-time Chairman will have the opportunity of taking into account the views of the manufacturers and the views of others also who would be sitting in the Committee which would decides as to how much rubber should be imported. So, their views should be reflected there and those views will be taken into account while importing the rubber.

Shri G.M. Banatwalla has rightly said that the figures do not tally. The figure given by one sector do not tally with the figures given by the other interests. The figures given by the agriculturists do not tally with the figures given by the manufacturers and the others. That difficulty is there. But even that difficulty can be solved by this Committee. They can try to find out some method for coming to the conclusion as to what are the real difficulties and then decide how much is to be imported.

We were told that the demand would be 1,18,000 tonnes. and that the production would be 1,50,000 tonnes and the quantity of rubber that is imported is, 30,000 tonnes which is exactly the quantity which was suggested by them. This is the quantity which is imported.....

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : After the Hon. Minister completes his speech....

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL : But everybody, without understanding as to how much is actually imported, is

saying that, lot of rubber is imported by the Government. The result is that the growers feel that their produce will not be sold in the market and, then it is sold at a distress price!

So, it is necessary for the Hon. Members to make the statement in a vary responsible manner. If, without understanding as to how much is really imported, they say that lot of rubber is imported, naturally the grower who has no access to the figures and who is not a very educated person, will feel that the import has been done to a large extent and that he should sell his goods at any price which is offered to him !

This kind of psychology should not be allowed to be created. I am giving you the figures. (Interruptions). Only 30,000 tonnes of rubber is allowed to be imported.

(Interruptions)

And the 30,000 tonnes of rubber should not affect the price.

If the timings is of importance, I assure this House that we will control the supply of this imported rubber in such a fashion that the growers interests are not affected. You should not have any difficulty on this point.

But please understand that there is the industry also which manufactures the goods which are sold in the market. If that industry is affected because of the non-availability of the raw material next, year that industry will not work And if next year that industry does not work, it will affect the growers also. So, it has become necessary for us to provide raw material necessary for manufacturing the tyre and other goods also. And it has become necessary for us to manufacture in such a fashion that our local demands are fulfilled as well as we are in a position to export also. Now here the question of balancing the interests of the growers and the interests of the manufacturers comes in. If we tilt in one direction, that sector also will be affected in the next year, may not be in the first year. That is why the Government has to maintain a balance and I can assure the House that Government would certainly protect the interests of all concerned in a manner that all stand to benefit and not lose. For this, the mechanism is also created. I appreciate your concern for the growers and I have assured you on the floor of the House that the direction in which you are trying to speak out your views is not an incorrect direction, but you please understand the other side also and you speak out your views on the floor of the

[Shri Shivraj V. Patil]

House and outside in such a manner that ultimately the interests of the growers are not also, indirectly and without your understanding, affected.

The point that has come before me here and before the House is this. We have not imported in a very large quantity, and yet, if the prices are going down, it may be because all of you have joined in a chorus to say that the import is done disproportionate to the requirements. If that kind of psychology is created, if that kind of impression is created, the prices will naturally go down. So, please be careful in making statements.

The third point which was made by the hon. Members related to the production of rubber itself. This is also a very important point and I will seek your indulgence, Sir, to read out the schemes which have been created by the Government for increasing the production. These are the schemes which have been enunciated by the Government for increasing the production:-

Rubber Plantation Development Scheme :

- (a) Cash subsidy at Rs. 5,000 per hectare for small growers. Cash subsidy at Rs. 3,000 per hectare for large growers.
- (b) For comparatively weaker small growers reimbursement of cost of planting material reimbursement of half the cost of fertilizers soil conservation subsidy of Rs. 150 per hectare.
- (c) Term loan at Rs. 15,000 per hectare through the Agriculture Refinance and Development Corporation. Interest subsidy at 3 per cent on this term loan.
- (d) Free technical and extension support.

Maintenance of Rubber Nurseries:

Number of Nurseries run by the Board—10.

Capacity of the Nurseries—1.2 million rubber plants.

Improvement in Processing of Small Holders Rubber :

Under this scheme, a project with World Bank assistance is under implementation. The project envisages establish-

ment of nine block rubber factories and expansion of one existing factory all in the cooperative sector.

The capacity of these factories is 25,000 tonnes.

Financial assistance is also granted by the Rubber Board to the Cooperative Marketing Societies for establishing processing factories. Specific rates of assistance under this scheme are :

- (i) Share capital contribution—Rs. 2 lakhs per society.
- (ii) Loan for establishing testing laboratory per society—Rs. 1 lakh.

Expansion of Rubber Cultivation in Non-traditional Areas :

Yesterday Mr. J.S. Patil spoke about it. I am giving this information.

Surveys and trial plantations have been conducted by the Board in the non-traditional areas of Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Manipur, Maharashtra and Goa. Three Regional Offices of the Rubber Board have been established at Agartala in Tripura, Gauhati in Assam and Donda in Goa. A Regional Research Centre each has also been established by the Rubber Board in Tripura and Maharashtra.

These are the developmental schemes and activities which are undertaken by the Rubber Board. We are trying to see that this important material is produced in our country and our demands are fulfilled by our own people here and we do have sufficient to export also. With this and in view we are trying to amend the Rubber Act. I hope that all points have been answered. If, however, one or two Members want to ask questions, they may, do so.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Mr. Balanandan.

SHRI E. BALANANDAN : Just now in Kerala there is a real glut. The growers are in panic. Will the Government intervene in the market and buy certain quantities of rubber at reasonable prices so that this kind of desperate sales by growers is versted and the panicky situation controlled !

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL : I have already said that the requirement is 1,80,000 tonnes. The demand by the manufacturers is 1,80,000 tonnes of rubber. The production is 1,50,000 tonnes. The

import is only 30,000 tonnes. The hon. Member should go to them and tell them that it is not necessary for them to sell the rubber at that price. I have already assured that we are not going to release the rubber in such a fashion that the prices go down too much and if there is escalation of the price too much, we will certainly release the rubber and we will try to keep the plants running. You are trying to protect the interests of the growers. I can understand that. But while trying to do that, you are trying to attack the Government and the imports. While doing that you are creating a psychology that there is a glut in the market. Don't create that psychology; only certain vested interests would benefit by that. You are all the time saying that there is import and there are a lot of imports (Interruptions) All of you are saying that we are importing rubber in a large quantity. Why do you say that? It is not necessary for you to say that. If you say that, the prices are likely to go down. This is how we respond to this kind of phenomenon.

SHRI E. BALANANDAN : I did not say anything. I have only said that the prices are crashing.

SHRIMATI SUSEELA GOPALAN : Out of 1000 tonnes of rubber produced every day, only 200 tonnes are lifted. What is the way out? Naturally they will sell it at distress prices. Only 200 tonnes are lifted. That is why the demand is coming from Kerala that the Rubber Board should go and purchase rubber and build up a buffer stock. 800 tonnes remain there unsold. You have to consider this and you should build a buffer stock.

SHRI GEORGE JOSEPH MUNDACKAL (Muriattupuzhe) : Now the production is the maximum. Some factories in the north are not lifting rubber due to strikes, labour trouble, power cut and lock-outs. And they are not also stocking rubber for 6 weeks as per the original understanding.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER : Have you brought it to the notice of the Rubber Board!

SHRI GEORGE JOSEPH MUNDACKAL : The Rubber Marketing Federation is there. The STG is there and the Rubber Pool Fund is also there. But somebody has to go and purchase rubber. Otherwise you cannot lift the rubber from the market. I request the Minister to rush to the market and purchase the surplus rubber from the cultivators.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL : Very unwittingly we are falling in the trap.

We have not imported rubber in a very large quantity.. (Interruptions) I have been telling that you are putting forth only those points which can help in creating psychology of glut in the market. Now you say that there is some strike going on or that power is not available and rubber is imported. What is going to happen in the price front! Unwittingly you are supporting the glut. Please do not do that.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Now the question is :

"That the Bill further to amend the Rubber Act, 1947, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER : Now, we shall take up clause-by-clause consideration.

The question is :

"That clause 2 to 6 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 to 6 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V PATIL : I beg to move :

"That the Bill be passed."

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER : The question is :

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

13.06 hrs.

LIMESTONE AND DOLOMITE
MINES LABOUR WELFARE (AMENDMENT) BILL.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI DHARMAVIR) : Sir, I beg to move that the Bill to amend the Limestone and Dolomite Mines Labour Welfare Fund Act, 1972, be taken into Consideration.

[SHRI V. N. GADGIL in the Chair]

As the hon Members are already aware, the Limestone and Dolomite Mines Labour Welfare Fund Act, 1972, was enacted to provide or levy and collection of a cess