

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES,
MINUTES

(i) RULES COMMITTEE

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS (DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH) : I beg to lay on the Table, Minutes of the sittings of the Rules Committee held on the 29th November and 6th December, 1967, 29th April, 1st August and 28th August, 1968.

(ii) COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

SHRI BHALJIBHAI PARMAR (Dohad) : I beg to lay on the Table, Minutes of the Thirty-second to Thirty-seventh sittings of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions held during the current session.

12.55 HRS.

CORRECTION OF ANSWER TO
S. Q. 361 RE: SALE OF SPARE
AERO-ENGINES

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M. R. KRISHNA) : Sir, I take this opportunity to correct the replies given in answer to some supplementaries on Starred Question 361 answered by me on the 7th August, 1968.

Sir, since it is a bit lengthy statement concerning this subject, if you permit, I will lay it on the Table of the House

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Yes.

श्री यशवन्त शर्मा (अमृतसर) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, इस वक्तव्य के ऊपर मुझे एक बात कहनी है। यह विल्कुल कामन-सेन्स की चीज थी कि एक बक्से के अन्दर कोई चीज बेची जाती है, जबतक बेचने वाले को पता न हो कि क्या बेच

to Question

रहे हैं और खरीदने वाले को पता न हो कि क्या खरीद रहे हैं—सीधी साधी बुद्धि वाला आदमी कभी समझ नहीं सकता है, मन्त्री महोदय ने उस दिन कहा कि बक्से बन्द बेचा गया लेकिन कामनसेन्स के अन्दर यह बात नहीं आती है, तो इस तरह से गुमराह किया जाता है, यह बड़े दुख की बात है।

STATEMENT

Sir, I take this opportunity to correct the replies given in answer to some supplementaries on Starred Question No. 361 answered by me on the 7th August, 1968.

(i) In reply to the supplementaries by Shri Yajna Datt Sharma suggesting that there should be a regular system whereby it is ensured that the Defence equipment sent abroad or received from abroad do not get into undesirable hands and do reach the proper consignees, I then stated as follows : "... The mistake has been committed at the Port level and therefore this investigation is going on". The correct position is as follows : Investigations have been carried out into the circumstances leading to the miscarriage of consignment and remedial measures have been taken.

(ii) In reply to another supplementary by Shri Yajna Datt Sharma enquiring whether the Defence Authorities were contacted about the disposal of the consignments by the Port authorities, I then stated as follows :

"... They were taking some steps but they were not at all the correct steps and, therefore, the whole thing has to be investigated now."

The correct position is as follows:—

They were taking steps as per the provisions of the Madras Port Trust Act. Investigations

carried out revealed that there was no other course open to the Port Trust Authorities except to auction the consignments, as nobody came forward to take them over in the absence of clear identification mark on the consignments.

- (iii) In reply to the supplementaries by Shri Yajna Datt Sharma and Shri A. B. Vajpayee, enquiring whether the boxes were opened before auction or whether the closed boxes themselves were auctioned, I then stated as follows :

“The boxes have been opened....”

The correct position is that the boxes were not opened.

- (iv) In reply to the supplementary by Shri Manubhai Patel, enquiring whether the stores were disposed of by Defence stores or by the Port authorities, I then stated as follows :

“It was disposed of by the Port authorities. It did not come to the knowledge to the Defence forces.”

The correct position is as follows :—

It was disposed of by the Port authorities. It did come to the knowledge of the Air Force later.

2. Any inconvenience caused is regretted. In order to give the facts more fully and in the correct perspective, a detailed statement is attached.

Two aero-engines, which were overhauled abroad and were consigned by sea to Bombay in May 1962 were not landed at that port and were declared as short landed by Bombay Port Trust. The Shippers also confirmed that the consignment had not been off loaded at any other port in India touched by the vessel.

2. In November 1964, Air Head quarters received from a firm in Madras an offer for the sale of 2 aero-engines. Subsequent investigations revealed that the two engines which were to be landed in Bombay were actually landed in Madras. The consignment bore no identification markings. Hence under the provisions of the Madras Port Trust Act, 1905, the Port Trust sent notices about these unclaimed packages on 13-5-1964 to all Shipping Agents and also to the Embarkation Commandant, Madras to the effect that if the Port Trust charges on the consignment were not paid and the goods cleared within 10 days of the notice, the goods would be sold by public auction.

3. On receipt of the notice, the Inspecting Staff of the Embarkation Headquarters, Madras examined all the packages on 20th May 1964. The packages had been lying in the open and bore no identification markings. They were in a highly rusted and deteriorated condition. In view of this and the fact that the packages could not be connected to any vessel which had arrived at Madras Port, the Inspecting Staff came to the conclusion by external examination (*i.e.* without opening the boxes) that the packages did not relate to the Defence Services.

4. Since the packages remained unclaimed by anyone, the Madras Port Trust notified them and later sold them by public auction, on 29-7-1964.

5. This case of aero-engines has been the only one of its kind in several years where a package containing no details whatever was landed in a different port and eventually turned to contain defence stores. Instructions have now been issued that in future, such consignments notified under Section 58 of the Madras Port Trust Act should be opened by the Embarkation Headquarters staff before ignoring the statutory notice of the Port Trust.