

12.54 hours.

STATEMENT RE. ALLEGED MISUSE OF TIRUPATI TEMPLE FUNDS

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND SOCIAL WELFARE (SHRI GOVINDA MENON) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the course of Supplementaries to Starred Question No. 1384 dated the 29th April, 1969, I was directed by you, Sir, to find out the facts regarding an allegation made by Shri Indarjit Gupta that the funds of the Tirupati temple are being misused to 'corner shares' in the Indian, Iron and Steel Co. Ltd., by the Goenkas. The Deputy Minister, Shri J. B. Muthyal Rao, was instructed by me to go to Tirupati, look into the registers, talk to the authorities of the Devasthanam and the Andhra Pradesh Government and report to me on this allegation. He had been to Tirupati along with an officer of the Ministry of Law and they had a series of detailed discussions with the Minister of Religious Endowments, Government of Andhra Pradesh and the officials of the Tirupati Devasthanam. They had also gone through the registers of investments and books of accounts maintained by the Devasthanam under the statutory provisions applicable to the Devasthanam. The registers were seen to be duly audited by the Assistant Commissioner of Local Fund Accounts. As a result of the discussions and the examination of the various registers, it was seen that there has been no misuse of funds of the Devasthanam as alleged. The rules made under section 100(2)(k) of the Madras Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Act, 1951, relating to the custody of moneys of the religious institutions, their deposits in, and withdrawals from, banks and investment of such moneys were found to have been observed. I am, therefore, to mention that there is no truth in the statement that the funds of the Tirupati temple were misused, as alleged.

12.56 hrs.

STATEMENT RE. COLLISION BETWEEN BAREILLY-AGRA PASSENGER AND BUS

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH) : Sir, it is with deep regret that I rise to inform the House that at about 03.45 hours on 12.5.1969 train No. 356 Down Bareilly-Agra Passenger collided with a bus at a manned level

crossing gate situated between Aligarh and Harduaganj stations on the Aligarh-Bareilly Broad Gauge single line section of the Northern Railway. As a result of this accident the bus caught fire.

In this accident 20 passengers of the bus have died 14 on the spot and 6 in Aligarh Civil Hospital. Another 37 bus passengers sustained injuries of whom 16 are suspected to have sustained grievous injuries, 18 simple injuries and 3 trivial injuries requiring only first aid.

The Assistant Medical Officer, Aligarh, Assistant Engineer and Railway Protection Force and Police officials left for the site at 05.00 hours by a jeep. Medical van from Tundla alongwith Assistant Medical Officer, Tundla and other medical staff was also rushed to the site. The General Manager, Northern Railway, and the Chief Operating Superintendent alongwith other Railway Officers also proceeded to the site of the accident. The Deputy Minister for Railways also paid a visit to the site of the accident and saw the injured persons in the Aligarh Civil Hospital.

Ex-gratia payment to the next of kin of dead and to those injured has been arranged.

The cause of the accident is under investigation and an Administrative Officers' Inquiry has been ordered. The District Magistrate has also ordered an inquiry by the Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Koel.

12.58 hrs.

STATEMENT RE. MINIMUM PRICE OF SUGAR

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHNIDE) : Government has decided that no change will be made in the minimum price of sugarcane for the crushing season 1969-70. The minimum price at present in force is Rs. 7.37 per quintal linked to a recovery of 9.4% or less with 5.36 paise per quintal for every increase of 0.1% of recovery above 9.4%.