

12.12 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

REPORTED NEWS ABOUT BURNING OF HOUSES AND SHOPS OF INDIANS IN BRITISH GUIANA.

Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur): I call the attention of the Prime Minister to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:—

The reported news about burning of houses and shops of Indians in British Guiana.

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of External Affairs (Shri Dinesh Singh): The population of British Guiana consists mainly of two non-indigenous racial groups. They are commonly known as the 'Africans' and 'East Indians' being respectively the descendants of the African and Indian labourers brought into the country over a century ago.

Of a total population of 590, 140 (according to the Census of 1961) Guianese of Indian descent are 289,790 and those of African descent number 152,660. This would be roughly 49½ and 32.7½ per cent respectively of the total population. People of Indian and African descent have been living in British Guiana for about 125 years and there has been no serious evidence of conflict between them until 1956 which led to the break up of the Peoples' Progressive party in 1957 and the formation of the Peoples' National Congress led by Mr. Burnham, a Guianese of African descent.

British Guiana attained internal self-government in 1961. In the elections held that year Dr. Cheddi Jagan came to power as a result of his Peoples' Progressive Party securing 20 out of 35 seats in the Legislative Assembly. The main Opposition is led by Mr. Burnham.

There are various factors that contribute to the troubled situation in British Guiana today. Apart from the ideological differences and the somewhat predominantly racial character of the two main Parties, the British Government's efforts to effect a new electoral registration system with an idea of conducting elections later this year under the Proportional Representation system has sharpened the conflict.

The present trouble has been going on since February 1964, largely as a conflict between two Labour Unions of the people of Indian descent in the sugar industry. It has, however, been joined by the people of African descent also. A State of Emergency was proclaimed by the Governor on 23rd May, 1964. According to reports received up to 26th May, 15 persons had died, 297 injured and 488 houses damaged or destroyed. No Indian national is involved in these disturbances.

Both Dr. Jagan and Mr. Burnham have visited the troubled spots and have appealed for peace. The British Government have flown further reinforcement of troops to the colony.

Shri Kapur Singh: What action do the Government propose to take to ensure that those East Indians who have suffered losses are reimbursed and a further repetition of this kind of incident does not occur?

Mr. Speaker: Indians?

Shri Kapur Singh: I did not say, Indian nationals. I said, East Indians. What diplomatic action or any other action do the Government propose or wish to take to see that those East Indians who have suffered losses are reimbursed and a further repetition of such incidents does not occur?

Shri Dinesh Singh: Government do not propose to take any action nor can they take any action. This is a

[Shri Dinesh Singh]

matter for the British Government. These people are British subjects.

Shri Kapur Singh: At the diplomatic level?

Mr. Speaker: He does not propose to take any action.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: May I know whether the Government have any further latest information leading to the resignation of the Home Minister there and whether we are in communication with the British Government on this subject and, if so, may we know what is the latest information?

Shri Dinesh Singh: We understand from the newspaper report that Mrs. Jagan, the Home Minister, has resigned as a protest against discriminatory practices followed by the police. We have no official information.

Shri P. C. Borooah: May I know how many Indians have been killed at the hands of the police?

Shri Dinesh Singh: I mentioned in the statement that no Indian nationals were involved.

12.16 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

REPORT ON THE WORKING OF DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1963 ALONG WITH ANNUAL ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT REPORT.

The Minister of Finance (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari): I beg to re-lay on the Table a copy of Report on the working of the Deposit Insurance Corporation for the year ended 31st December, 1963 along with the Annual Accounts and the Audit Report thereon, under sub-section

(2) of section 32 of the Deposit Insurance Corporation Act, 1961. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-2758/64].

STATEMENTS SHOWING ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON VARIOUS ASSURANCES, PROMISES AND UNDERTAKINGS GIVEN BY MINISTERS DURING VARIOUS SESSIONS OF THIRD LOK SABHA.

The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs (Shri Satya Narayan Sinha): I beg to lay on the Table the following statements showing the action taken by the Government on various assurances, promises and undertakings given by Ministers during the various sessions of Third Lok Sabha:—

(i) Supplementary Statement No. II, Seventh Session, 1964.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-2924/64].

(ii) Supplementary Statement No. V, Sixth Session, 1963.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-2925/64].

(iii) Supplementary Statement No. VII, Fifth Session, 1963.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-2926/64].

(iv) Supplementary Statement No. XI, Fourth Session, 1963.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-2927/64].

(v) Supplementary Statement No. XIV, Third Session, 1962-63.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-2928/64].

(vi) Supplementary Statement No. XVII, Second Session, 1962.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-2929/64].

(vii) Supplementary Statement No. XX, First Session, 1962.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT-2930/64].