

through different phases of the business cycle over the last two years. The effects seem to be most pronounced in West Germany and, according to newspaper reports, in Belgium also. Some countries like France, Switzerland, Denmark and Sweden seem to have passed the stage of recession and have embarked upon recovery programmes.

(b) While the general effect of such a recession would be curtailment of imports in varying degrees, no assessment has been possible of its impact on our economy because of a multitude of other factors which affect both exports from India and imports into the countries concerned. However, over the first few months of the current year there have been no significant variations in our exports to the countries concerned as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

In regard to aid, considering that the recession has been uniform and that the question of aid depends on a number of other factors, it is not possible to say how far the recession would materially affect our aid prospects.

Allocation of Iron and Steel and Steel Export Promotion

6438. Shri Virendrakumar Shah: Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Conference of State Directors of Industry and the Iron and Steel Controller was held in New Delhi on the 14th July, 1967 to consider the measures to streamline the present system of allocation of iron and steel and to devise means for steel export promotion;

(b) if so, the decisions taken at the conference; and

(c) the steps being taken to implement them?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Steel, Mines and Metals (Shri

F. C. Sethi): (a) to (c). A meeting of State Directors of Industries was proposed to be held on the 14th July, 1967 to consider the scheme of distribution of "scarce" categories of steel as devised by the Joint Plant Committee and connected matters. The meeting was postponed and is now proposed to be held on the 7th August, 1967.

Cour Factories in Kerala

6439. Shrimati Susheela Gopalan: Shri A. K. Gopalan: Shri C. K. Chakrapani: Shri P. Gopalan:

Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that there was a two-hour protest strike in all the four factories in Alleppey District (Kerala) on the 19th June, 1967 as a first step towards an indefinite strike for the revision of wages;

(b) whether Government are also aware of the likely effect of a long drawn strike in this sector on the foreign exchange earnings of the country, and

(c) if so, what steps Government propose to take to avert the situation and to protect foreign exchange earnings?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Commerce (Shri Shaif Qureshi): (a) Government are not aware of any protest strike in four factories in Alleppey District on the 19th June, 1967

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

Newspprint Factory in Assam

6440. Shri Bodabrata Barua: Will the Minister of Industrial Development and Company Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the availability of the necessary pulp and other