

[Shri H. N. Bahuguna]

will as a result become more efficient, more responsive to the public needs and at diminished costs.

So far, there has been no price formulation for lubricants and greases, which were subjected to a kind of 'block control'. The reason for this was the existence of a large number of brands of the different companies, which were until recently in the private sector. Additive packages are also now indigenously available. In this changed situation, basic ceiling selling prices have been determined for automotive lubes and non-additive secondary grade lubes comprising about 70 per cent of the total sale of lubes. As a result, the prices of some of the commonly used grades would be reduced. For the rest which are mostly industrial grades, the prices are frozen at current levels.

Changes in rates of excise/customs duties necessitated by the aforesaid decisions are being notified.

A number of special products such as Refinery gas, Wax, Petroleum coke, Spirits and Solvents hitherto outside the pricing mechanism have now been brought under the pricing umbrella, thus achieving a more equitable pricing arrangement.

Government have introduced a system of meeting with the Chief Executives of all the oil companies every month at the Minister's level and reviewing the problems of the industry. It is proposed to use this forum to ensure that the declared objectives of the new policy of pricing of petroleum products are actually realised.

With your permission, Sir, I place on the Table of the House copies of the Government Resolution dated the 16th December, 1977, containing the decisions of Government as well as

Summary of Recommendations and Conclusions of the final report of the Oil Prices Committee. [Placed in Library. See No LT-1377/77].

12.40 hrs.

STATEMENT RE. TAKE-OVER OF MANAGEMENT OF MESSRS. BENGAL CHEMICAL AND PHARMACEUTICAL WORKS LTD., CALCUTTA.

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND FERTILISERS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA): M/s. Bengal Chemical and Pharmaceutical Works Limited was founded by Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray in 1901, a pioneer in the manufacture of Drugs and Chemicals in West Bengal with the twin objectives of making India self-sufficient in drugs and chemicals and opening fresh avenues of employment.

The company has four manufacturing units as follows and employes about 2200 people:

1. Maniktala—Drugs and Pharmaceuticals;
2. Panihat—Chemicals;
3. Bombay—Drugs and home products;
4. Kanpur—Drugs and home products.

The company had been earning profits till 1968-69. However, there have been consistent losses thereafter and the losses during 1969-70 to 1976-77 were of the order of Rs. 269 lakhs. Government had been receiving reports for some time about the inefficient operation and acts of mismanagement. An investigation into the affairs of the company in terms of Section 15 of the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act (IDR) was consequently ordered by the Government on August 22, 1977. The report of the Committee was received on October 24, 1977.

The Committee went into all the major aspects of the working of this company. While recording its assessment that, with a suitable infusion of capital, selective implementation of a few expansion programmes, rationalisation of product-mix, improvement of marketing and induction of efficient management could restore the company's health, the Committee recommended that the management of the company should be immediately taken over under Section 18-A of the IDR Act.

I am happy to inform the House that after a careful consideration of the Committee's recommendations, the Government have taken a decision to take-over the management of the company forthwith. The Government has also appointed a Board of Management to take-over the management of the company.

I have every hope that the Working Class of this pioneer institution will assist in restoring this glorious monument to the memory of one of India's illustrious sons—Acharya P. C. Ray, to its leading role in the chemical and pharmaceutical activity of our country.

**SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN** (Coimbatore): Mr. Speaker, I want to make a submission. I am very happy to hear the statement that the Minister has made but, Sir, for the last one month or so the workers have not received their remuneration because the erstwhile management had put a stop to it. Sir, it is because of the cooperation of the workers that the whole thing has taken place and if the Minister could give an assurance to the effect that the dues of the workers will be cleared as soon as possible, that would give them further encouragement.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Please take that into consideration.

12.44 hrs.

## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA):** With your permission, Sir, I rise to announce that Government Business in this House during the week commencing 19th December, 1977, will consist of:—

(1) Consideration and Passing of the Constitution (Forty-Fourth Amendment) Bill, 1977.

(2) Consideration of any item of Government Business carried over from today's Order Paper.

(3) Consideration of a motion for reference of the Multi State Co-operative Societies Bill, 1977 to a Joint Committee of both Houses.

(4) Consideration and passing of the following Bills, as passed by Rajya Sabha:—

(a) The Betwa River Board (Amendment) Bill, 1977.

(b) The Port Laws (Amendment) Bill, 1977.

(c) The Children (Amendment) Bill, 1977.

(5) Further discussion on the Motion regarding statement on two serious train accidents.

(6) Further discussion on the Motion regarding price rise.

**PROF. P. G. MAVALANKAR:** Gandhinagar): Sir, as you know and as the House is aware we have only four days left next week of the current Session. I want to invite the attention of the government to some of the very major pieces of legislation which have not yet come before the House. I refer in particular to three measures—in order of priority—that is there is no mention whatsoever in the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs' statement or previously about