

[Translation]

SHRI VISHNU MODI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, you have listened to the reply given by the hon. Minister. It took them 1½ years to decide whether it was a case of violation or not and whether a show cause notice could be served or not. At the same time, I would like to know whether they imported the drug at a higher price from their principal? They had imported it at a much higher price than what was prevailing in the international market. They did so because they were to transfer the money. I want to know whether the hon. Minister is aware of it and if so, the reasons therefor?

[English]

SHRI R.K. JAICHANDRA SINGH : The difficulty is that this particular drug is being manufactured only by one company in the world. Whether they purchase the drug from their principal company or another company it is very difficult to find out. We have tried to find out, but since it is manufactured only by one company, we are not in a position to find out.

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU : Oxyfedrine and other life saving drugs are being produced according to the licence being issued by the Central Government. If there is any violation, you are taking action. I appreciate the Government for action taken against some of the companies. At the same time, I would like to bring it to the notice of the Government that the Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd. at Madras has been closed *sine die*, and four thousand employees are out of job. This is a company which is managed by the Central Government and they are producing cheapest drugs used for the poor and down-trodden. I would like to know whether any action has been taken by the Government in order to open the factory and give employment to four thousand employees.

SHRI R. K. JAICHANDRA SINGH : Though this question would need a separate notice, I can inform the hon. Member that we are taking up the preparation of rehabilitation plan of all the five drug Companies under the Ministry

of Industry, including IDPL. Reports about some of them have already been submitted. The report about IDPL is expected next month. I have given them the deadline of 1st June. We expect that the report on the complete rehabilitation would come some time in June and I can assure the hon. Member that the IDPL Madras would not be closed down.

Compulsory inspection of cooking gas connections to ensure safety

*856. **SHRIMATI KISHORI SINHA :**
SHRI JAGANNATH
PATTNAIK :

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to provide for compulsory inspection of cooking gas connections to ensure safety of women who happen to be the victims of gas explosions in kitchens;

(b) whether gas distributors have trained people to install and check gas connections;

(c) whether several distributors employ illiterate personnel to distribute cylinders and connect these although they have no training in safety measures; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to correct the present system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) LPG distributors of the oil marketing companies are under instructions to ensure that deliverymen and mechanics employed by them are adequately trained to do their job in a safe and competent manner.

SHRIMATI KISHORI SINHA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government have any arrangement to check

whether the instructions of the Government have been carried out or not.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH : There is regular checking to ensure that the instructions given by the Government and Oil Companies are adhered to. Distributors are obliged, under the agreement, to maintain trained mechanics for installation work and repair work and make available free technical advice to the customers. The training has to be of standards laid down by the marketing companies. The companies also conduct training courses for them and there are regular checks to see that these mechanics are trained to get the desired standards.

SHRIMATI KISHORI SINHA : I would like to know whether the Government has received any complaints that the pin-type valve cylinders are unsafe because the pin tends to come off, leading to leakage. At the same time, I would also like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government are aware that sub-standard LPG cylinders are in circulation and whether ISI (Indian Standards Institution) marking is compulsory for the LPG cylinders. If not, does the Government propose to make it compulsory so as to prevent health hazards?

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH : Sir, with the introduction of self-closing valves and click-on regulators, it is now very simple and easy for housewives to connect the LPG cylinders to the stoves. As far as the question whether ISI standards are being adhered to or not is concerned, the LPG cylinders are procured by the oil companies from the cylinder-manufacturing units after the quality of the cylinders is approved by the ISI and the Chief Controller of the Explosives. In the bottling plant also, i.e. at the filling end, care is taken to see that ISI standard cylinders are utilised. Also, the cylinders are given a water bath to detect any leakage. By these methods, we are trying to ensure that these accidents do not occur. But it has been seen that accidents have occurred because of careless handling and bad maintenance at the end of the customers. I would like to inform the House that Government is

considering the constitution of a Committee headed by a leading public figure to look into this question in all its aspects and suggest measures to ensure that these accidents are minimised and the most rigorous standards are adhered to.

(Interruptions)

Safeguard in Palmyra tapping occupation

*857. **SHRI N. DENNIS :** Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the steps taken by Government to safeguard the Palmyra tapping occupation from deterioration; and

(b) whether Government would come forward to protect the persons engaged in Palmyra jaggery production and connected subsidiary occupations with subsidies and loans for purchasing utensils and firewood for the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) and (b) A statement is given below.

Statement

(a) and (b) Khadi and Village Industries Commission encourages artisans engaged in Palmyra Tapping occupation to form Co-operatives and Federations. It provides them financial assistance on concessional terms such as for Capital Expenditure for tools, equipment machines, worksheds, etc. It also provides them Working Capital for production and sale as per the prescribed norms. This also covers expenditure on firewood. The loan paid for working capital are repayable in 5 years whereas capital expenditure loans are repayable in 5/10 years depending upon the nature of assets. The loans carry interest at 4% only.

The products of this industry are enjoying exemption from income-tax and excise. KVIC also provides Share Capital Loans to the artisans and members of the societies to enhance their borrowing power apart from providing capital formation loans to registered institutions.