

Development and Cooperation (Shri Shyam Dhar Mishra): (a) Firm estimates of production for cotton for 1965-66 are not yet available. However, on the present indications, Cotton production during 1965-66 is expected to show a decline of 5—8 per cent compared to 1964-65.

(b) The main reason for the anticipated fall in production of Cotton is the erratic behaviour of monsoons and failure of rains in many parts of the country.

U.S. Food Mission's Visit to Scarcity Areas

*1197. **Shri R. S. Pandey:**
Shri M. R. Krishna:
Shri Dharmalingam:
Shri Onkar Lal Berwa:
Shri Ram Harkh Yadav:

Will the Minister of Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Cooperation be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a U.S. study mission visited India in January, 1966 to study the food situation arising out of the scarcity conditions on account of failure of monsoon;

(b) if so, whether the said mission has completed their work and submitted a report to Government on their findings and conclusions; and

(c) the main features thereof?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Cooperation (Shri Govinda Menon): (a) A U.S. Food-grains Survey Team visited various ports in January, 1966 primarily to assess the maximum grain handling capacity at Indian ports together with the requirements of additional grain handling machinery and equipment. The Team also visited certain drought affected areas in various parts of the country.

(b) Copies of the report of the Team have been recently received by the Government.

(c) A statement giving the main features of the report is laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-6072/66].

Jayanti Shipping Company

*1198. **Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath:**
Shri Hukam Chand
Kachhavaia:

Will the Minister of Transport, Aviation, Shipping and Tourism be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Committee of Inquiry has been appointed to investigate the affairs of Jayanti Shipping Company, Ltd;

(b) if so, the composition and personnel of the committee;

(c) the terms of reference; and

(d) whether a dead line has been fixed for submission of the report?

The Minister of Transport, Aviation, Shipping and Tourism (Shri Sanjiva Reddy): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Committee consists of Shri Y. N. Sukthankar, Government Director on the Board of Directors of Indian Shipping Companies and Shri S. L. Bhalla, a nominee of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.

(c) The terms of reference are as follows:—

(i) To look into the allegations made in Parliament and in the letters received by the Government and the Shipping Development Fund Committee against the Jayanti Shipping Company and its management in regard to the accounts and affairs of the Company.

(ii) To scrutinise all the relevant facts relating to the management and operation of the company since its incorporation.

(iii) To examine and inspect the accounts and other documents as may be necessary with a

view to assessing its financial position and ascertaining whether the foreign exchange earned has been duly accounted for.

- (iv) Any other specific matter which may be referred to it by the Government or the Shipping Development Fund Committee.

(d) The Committee has been asked to submit its report within two months.

Prices of Vegetable Ghee

*1199. **Shri Yashpal Singh:** Will the Minister of Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Cooperation be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that prices of vegetable ghee have increased by about seventy per cent during the last twenty months;

(b) if so, whether any enquiry has been made to find out the causes for this; and

(c) the steps taken to bring it down?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Cooperation (Shri Shinde): (a) The prices of vanaspati have increased by about 25 per cent during the period.

(b) The price of vanaspati largely depends on the prevailing price of groundnut oil which increased by about 40 per cent during the same period. The smaller increase in vanaspati prices is mainly due to the use of some quantity of cheaper imported oils.

(c) The following steps have been taken:—

- (i) Measures for increasing the output of groundnut and groundnut oil are being intensified.
- (ii) Ban on export of edible oils and vanaspati, and credit

restrictions, imposed earlier are being continued.

- (iii) The use of cheaper imported oils like soybean oil in vanaspati manufacture is being encouraged. About 70,000 tonnes of this oil were imported from the U.S.A. under P.L. 480 during 1965, and another 150,000 tonnes are proposed to be imported during 1966.

Jayanti Shipping Company

*1200. **Shri Maurya:**

Shri Kishen Pattanayak:

Will the Minister of Transport, Aviation, Shipping and Tourism be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any complaints or reports about the misuse of Employee's Provident Fund money by the Jayanti Shipping Company;

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard; and

(c) whether Government have asked the appropriate authority to look into the Provident Fund Accounts of the said Shipping Company to ensure that these are being properly maintained and money correctly used or invested in the interest of and for the benefit of the Company's employees in the manner prescribed by provident fund rules and regulations?

The Minister of Transport, Aviation, Shipping and Tourism (Shri Sanjiva Reddy): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). The factual position was ascertained from the Company who stated that about Rs. 12 lakhs, out of Provident Fund monies was being kept with the company on which interest at 12 per cent per annum was being provided. The information furnished by the company was passed on to the Ministry of Labour and Employment for such action as may be considered by them.