

ceived on this score and if any enquiry has been undertaken, by whom was it undertaken?

**Shri L. N. Mishra:** An enquiry was made and it was found to be not a mining accident. The normal precautionary measures are already taken there.

**Shrimati Renu Chakravarty:** Are we to take that the five people who have died, have died naturally?

**Shri L. N. Mishra:** They have died by accident but that was because of the presence of an abnormal quantity of carbon dioxide in a well which had nothing to do with the mining gas.

**Shrimati Renu Chakravarty:** In the case of mines there are certain safety rules which have to be observed by the mine-owners in respect of these seams which have gases. In this particular case, the hon. Parliamentary Secretary says that they died of carbon dioxide. Is it the finding of the committee that there was no air? What other findings were made by the Committee?

**Shri L. N. Mishra:** A regular enquiry was made by the local officer of the Mines Department, and it was found that the well was not in use for some months, and that the well has no connection with the seams which are directly beneath the well. There are three seams. Though the Poniati and Porihati seams are gassy, they are far below and the surface of Rana seam is not gassy. It was, therefore, found that the well or the accident had nothing to do with mining.

**Shri Bose:** May I know whether any of the coal seams containing gas extends up to the well or not?

**Shri L. N. Mishra:** No, Sir.

**Shri S. C. Samanta:** Did the department make enquiries whether gas was bubbling through water, because the hon. Minister said that the seam is beneath the well, and there may be some percolation?

**Shri L. N. Mishra:** No, Sir. The seam beneath the well is not gassy; moreover, there are no cracks or fissures.

**Raja Mahendra Pratap:** May I know whether the families have been fully compensated?

**Shri L. N. Mishra:** This was a normal accident outside the mining area and no question of compensation arises.

#### Metric System of Coinage, Weights and Measures

\*1449. **Shri Sanganna:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether any steps have been taken to print Arithmetic books on Decimal System of Coinage and the Metric System of Weights and Measures for introduction in the schools and colleges;

(b) if so, at what stage the matter stands; and

(c) if the answer to part (a) is in the negative, the reasons therefor?

**The Deputy Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Satish Chandra):** (a) to (c). The present Arithmetic books include lessons on the metric system. It is necessary, however, to give it much greater importance in the teaching of arithmetic. State Governments have agreed to revise the school books as and when they fall due for reprinting. Meanwhile, teachers are being advised to give more attention to the teaching of the metric system. A Manual for Teachers has been prepared and sent to all the secondary schools through the State Directors of Public Instruction. Steps are being taken to get the Manual translated into Indian languages for use in the primary schools.

**Shri Sanganna:** May I know whether any directive has been issued by the Government of India to expedite the process of introduction of this system?

**Shri Satish Chandra:** Yes, Sir. As I have said just now the entire answer covers that point—we have actually printed a manual for secondary school teachers and it has been distributed all over India. All the State Governments have agreed that when text books are revised this system will gradually find a more important place.

**Shri Sanganna:** Are the Government aware that the introduction of the system entails financial implications in the concerned institutions?

**Shri Satish Chandra:** It is not intended to change over the text books overnight. As I said, they will be reprinted with gradual emphasis on the metric system as and when they fall due for reprinting.

**Shri Supakar:** May I know if, even before the introduction of metric system of weights and measures, universities and boards of education have invented problems in arithmetic complicated enough to strike terrors in the minds of students?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** We will go to the next question.

#### Prices of Manufactured Products

**1450. Shri Shree Narayan Das:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether any effective steps have been taken to check the rising trend in prices of the manufactured products in the country;

(b) whether the Labour, Trade and Industrial Organisations have been consulted in this regard; and

(c) if so, with what result?

**The Deputy Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Satish Chandra):** (a) to (c). A statement is placed on the Table of the House. [See Appendix VI, annexure No. 19].

**Shri Shree Narayan Das:** From the statement it appears that certain steps have been taken by the Gov-  
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ernment. I would like to know whether, as a result of the steps taken, there has been any fall or rise in the index number of prices of manufactured goods; if so, to what extent?

**The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri):** Well, special steps have not been taken during the last few months, and it is true that the prices have gone up during these months. It is all because of the shortage of raw material, especially, steel, copper, brass etc.; and unless we are able to supply raw material in adequate quantity it would be really difficult to control the prices. We can introduce control, but it should be complete rationing and control. In the case of industries, which are so widespread, it is not easily possible as we can do in the case of foodgrains. Even in the case of foodgrains, the hon. Member is very well aware that as soon as it is imposed or introduced there is shortage, scarcity, cornering of foodgrains etc. The same thing will apply in this case. So the most important thing is that we should increase our production, and the goods that we cannot produce ourselves in the country should be imported from abroad.

Well, I cannot say at the present moment what our policy would be in connection with the next licensing period. But we are going to take a decision very soon, because the licensing period begins from 1st October. We will be deciding it in about a few days' time. Therefore, if it is possible to allot or allocate more funds for import of raw materials which are absolutely essential, I hope the situation would ease; but I cannot give a general assurance at the present moment in this regard.

**Shri Shree Narayan Das:** May I know how the existing prices of some of the important manufactured goods compare with the prices that prevailed last year during the same period?

**Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri:** I cannot give the exact figures; but one thing