

Shri L. N. Mishra: From the statement, it appears that due attention has not been paid to the problem. May I know whether in view of the demand for fixation of a minimum price for jute, the Government have under consideration any proposal to carry out some intensive and extensive pilot scheme in this connection?

Shri Karmarkar: As regards the cost calculation scheme, I do not agree with the hon. Member that the rates fixed by Government are not satisfactory. Government have done the best they could to find out the actual cost of production, as far as possible.

Shri A. C. Guha: May I know whether the Government has any idea whether the price now being paid for raw jute is economic or not?

Shri Karmarkar: So far as the past two months are concerned the prices have gone down very very much, but taking the average on the whole, the Government is satisfied that the prices raw jute fetched on an average was quite above the production price.

JUTE PRICES

*1962. **Shri L. N. Mishra:** (a) Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the "Prices Sub-Committee", was appointed by the Government of India, to prevent jute prices from falling below a rock bottom minimum?

(b) Is it a fact that the present slump in the Indian market has affected the price of raw jute adversely and the prices that are offered for Bihar jute, of even superior quality, do not cover the cost of its production?

(c) If so, what steps do Government propose to take to guarantee a remunerative price for jute and to safeguard the interests of the jute-growers of India?

The Deputy Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Karmarkar): (a) The Prices Sub-Committee of the Policy Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries was appointed in 1945 to consider the principles on which producer's prices of agricultural and animal husbandry produce of all descriptions should be fixed and the means by which such prices can be made effective and an assured market provided, and to make recommendations. The terms of reference of the Sub-Committee thus covered the question of minimum prices for raw jute.

(b) Prices of jute, including Bihar jute have been falling since January, 1952, but there is no evidence to indicate that taking the 1951-52 Jute

Season as a whole the jute cultivators of Bihar have suffered a loss.

(c) Does not arise.

Shri L. N. Mishra: May I know, Sir, whether the Prices Sub-Committee has recommended that it is obligatory on the part of the State to prevent jute prices from falling below a rock bottom minimum?

Shri Karmarkar: Sir, if that implies an obligation on the part of the State to purchase jute if it goes down below a rock bottom, there is no such system.

Shri L. N. Mishra: May I know, Sir, the recommendations of the Jute Planning Sub-Committee appointed by the Central Jute Committee in connection with the prices of jute?

Shri Karmarkar: About that particularly, I should like to have notice. I have the recommendations of the Sub-Committee in general.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Is this Prices Sub-Committee in existence today, and if so, what is the personnel?

Shri Karmarkar: I suppose normally after it finishes its work it expires, but I shall find out.

Shri L. N. Mishra: From the statement given by the Minister in answer to question No. 1961, it appears that the cost of cultivation of jute is something like Rs. 28 per maund. May I know what is the ruling price in the Calcutta market at present?

Shri Karmarkar: Sir, I have under this question the Calcutta price of Bihar jute. For 'northern bottom' as against July 1951, the price on June 4 this year was Rs. 33 per md. 'western bottom' from the monthly average of Rs. 64-13 for July 1951, the present price is Rs. 27; and what we call 'jungle bottom' has come down from, as against July 1951 Rs. 64-7, to May average Rs. 21-1.

Shri L. N. Mishra: In view of the fact that the prices have fallen below the cost of production, do the Government propose to have some minimum price for jute?

Shri Karmarkar: We are considering the matter.

DRUGS AND PHARMACEUTICALS

*1963. **Shri S. V. Ramaswamy:** (a) Will the Minister of Health be pleased to state what is the number of Indian firms which manufacture drugs and pharmaceuticals?

(b) Have there been complaints that such manufacturers do not always