

p sophisticated equipments are being procured. Laboratory managers have also been deputed for training in the leading laboratories abroad.

(d) BIS Certification Scheme is voluntary in nature. Compulsory Certification has been provided by the Government under various Acts, Orders, Rules etc. only in such products (presently 129) which are important from the point of view of health and safety of consumers.

F.C. I. Offices in West Bengal

*112. PROF. MALINI BHATTACHARAYA: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether district officers of the Food Corporation of India in West Bengal have been closed down;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the State Government of West Bengal has represented against the decision; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Union Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. Prior to 1st August, 1992 FCI was handling retail distribution of foodgrains in West Bengal on behalf of the State Government. The State Government withdrew the aforesaid work from FCI w.e.f. 1.8.92, resulting in reduction of workload of FCI in the Region. In view of this, District Offices in the Region have been re-organised and reduced from 25 to 16 on the basis of the recommendations of the Zonal Committee.

(c) and (d). Yes, Sir. The Chief Minister of West Bengal has written in May, 1993, to the Central Government to cancel the programme of closing down of district offices as well as godowns stating that the procurement of rice is expected to increase

manifold in coming years. The Central Government has instructed the FCI to re-examine the entire matter.

Urdu University Committee

*113. SHRI SYED SHAHABUDDIN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Urdu University Committee has submitted its final report to the Government;

(b) if so, the major recommendations made;

(c) whether the Government propose to introduce a Bill for the establishment of a Central Urdu University; and

(d) if so, the time by which it is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (d). The Committee on Establishment of Urdu University has submitted its report to the Government. Its major recommendations are the setting up of a new Central Urdu University, completely secular in character and open to all, on the pattern of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) with suitable changes and adaptations: enabling provisions for affiliation of institutions and opening of teaching institutions on a selective basis not withstanding its predominantly distance education character; and greater emphasis to the teaching of Science and Technology and job oriented courses through the medium of Urdu.

The Report of the Committee is under consideration of the Government.

Benefits of Excise Concessions to Consumers

*114. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAEE:

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES,

CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the time-bound strategy worked out by the Government to ensure the passage of excise concessions to the consumers;

(b) the details of those industries/manufacturers who have neither passed on these benefits to the consumers nor given any information in this regard to the Government so far;

(c) the specific steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government against the defaulting industries and to ensure that the benefits of the concessions are passed on to consumers; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d). The Standards of Weights & Measures (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 1977 made under the Standards of Weights & Measures Act require declaration of price to be made by the manufacturers on the pre-packed commodities and in the event of a reduction in duties, notification of the reduced prices in the national dailies by means of advertisements.

When the tax concessions were announced by the Govt. the manufacturers were directed to notify the revised price of their products for information of the consumers in the news-papers. They were also advised to instruct their retail dealers to charge only the revised prices. Wide publicity was also given through national and regional newspapers drawing attention of the manufacturers and retailers to comply with the rules.

As the Ministry in charge of consumer protection, all the concerned administrative Ministries were also requested to persuade various sections of industry under their charge to pass on the rebate to consumers and to take appropriate action.

Two meetings were also taken with the

representatives of the manufacturers and voluntary consumer organisations in which the need to pass on the benefits to the consumers was underlined. The representatives of the consumer organisations disputed the claims made by the industry associations that they had reduced the prices of their products and passed on the concessions to the consumers.

As this Ministry is not in a position to ascertain the exact impact of excise concessions on prices and the other components for price fixation, the Bureau of Industrial Costs & Prices (BICP) has been requested to undertake a study and give a report within a month in respect of some specific consumer products of mass consumption and advise whether the excise concessions have been passed on to the consumers.

Rail Network in Kerala

*115. SHRI K. M. MATHEW: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some railway projects in Southern Railway in Kerala are yet to be completed;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to complete the projects as per schedule; and

(d) the new projects proposed to be taken up during the Eighth Five Year Plan in the state along with the estimated cost of construction, project-wise?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Doubling of Kayankulam-Quilon and Quilon-Trivandrum railway lines.

(c) The doubling of Kayamkulam-Karunagapalli (13.65 kms) section of Kayamkulam-Quilon line is targetted for completion in 1993-94 and the balance by 1995-96. Doubling of Quilon-Trivandrum section would be taken up in the coming years as per availability of resources after