

### **Increase in Goitre Cases in Kerala**

386. SHRI VAKKOM PURUSHOTHA-MAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Union Government has been drawn to the increase in cases of goitre in Kottayam and Idukki district of Kerala; and

(b) if so, whether any steps have been taken to identify the reasons therefor and to check the disease?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI RAFIQUE ALAM): (a) Studies conducted by the Medical College, Kottayam have revealed that the incidence of Goitre in the districts of Kottayam and Idukki varies from 13% to 39%.

(b) Nutritional iodine deficiency is the cause of Goitre and other associated disorders. Intake of iodised salt is the simple and cheapest method for the control of Goitre and other iodine deficiency disorders. The Government of India has launched a scheme of universal iodisation of edible salt in a phased manner to be completed by the year 1992. The State Govt. of Kerala has been advised to issue notification banning sale of non-iodised salt in the State on priority basis so that only iodised salt is available.

### **Closure of Industries Producing Cheap Woollen Blankets**

387. SHRI RAJ KUMAR RAI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the industries which were licensed for the production of Cheap Shoddy woollen blankets and cloth meant for the common man have been closed down if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) the number of units that have been closed down and workers rendered jobless; and

(c) the steps taken by Union Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE): (a) and (b). No units have been exclusively licensed for the Production of cheap shoddy woollen blankets and cloth. However, most of the Shoddy Units manufacture Shoddy blankets and cloth required by common man. Out of 52 woollen units (worsted/non-worsted) closed as on 31st May, 1989 as per available record, 30 are nonworsted Spinning/Weaving/Composite Units. Separate closure figures for shoddy units are not available. Closures have taken place due to various reasons like financial problems, labour unrest, lock-outs, old machinery, strikes non-availability of orders etc.

(c) Government have given possible Assistance to the Industry from time to time as follows:—

1) The import of basic rawmaterial i.e. Woollen/Synthetic Rags required by the Shoddy Industry is allowed under OGL to actual users.

2) The effective rate of import duty on synthetic rags required by the Shoddy Industry has been brought down from 80% AV to 25% AV.

3) Shoddy yarn/Shoddy blankets have been exempted from the levy of excise duty. Excise duty on Shoddy Fabrics upto the value of Rs. 60/- per square metre has been exempted.

4) Import duty on certain woollen machinery has been reduced from 101% to 35%.

5) The Textile Modernising Fund Scheme with an outlay of Rs.750 crores effective from 1.8.86 which is operated by IDBI is also available to the Woollen Industry in General.