

fabric in the U.S. market. A copy of their first report has already been made available to the Handloom Industry through the Handloom Export Promotion Council.

(iii) Handicrafts and Handlooms Export Corporation has participated in the Montreal Fair and in this way has publicised handloom fabrics.

(e) More recently an *ad hoc* Committee of the Handloom Export Promotion Council on export of 'Bleeding Madras' fabrics has submitted a Report to the Export Promotion Council and the latter has forwarded its recommendations on the suggestions made by the Committee. These suggestions are under consideration of the Government.

#### CRISIS IN HANDLOOM INDUSTRY

2769. SHRI S. K. SAMBANDHAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the crisis in the handloom industry at present ; and

(b) if so, the action taken to relieve the handloom weavers ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI) : (a) The Government are aware that the Handloom industry, in common with the cotton textile industry as a whole, is facing certain difficulties. This is mainly due to rising costs of production and recession in demand.

(b) the following are among action taken to remedy the situation :

(i) setting up of a Committee under the Textile Commissioner to closely watch the supply and prices of cotton yarns ;

(ii) grant of special rebates over an extended period to stimulate sales of handloom cloth ; and

(iii) special steps taken to encourage exports.

It is hoped that the substantial improvement in cotton production and potential increase in purchasing power due to a

marked improvement in agricultural production, would encourage a greater off take of handloom products.

#### LAKSHMIRATTAN COTTON MILLS

2770. SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to lay on the Table, the report of investigations made into the affairs of Lakshmirattan Cotton Mills Co. Ltd., Kanpur and state :

(a) the follow-up action taken on the report ;

(b) the loss of excise duty to Government and of wages to workers as a result of the closure of the mill ; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to provide employment to about 4,000 workers of the mill and to avoid the loss of production resulting from its closure since the 6th September, 1966 ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI DINESH SINGH) : The report is a confidential document and it will not be desirable to place it on the Table of the House.

(a) The Report was examined very carefully and the Government came to the conclusion that under the circumstances the concern should not be taken over and run under the Industries (Development & Regulation) Act or to finance the operation of the running of the mill.

(b) Information is being collected and it will be laid on the Table of the House.

(c) It is understood that an agreement has been reached between the management and the workers. In pursuance of the agreement, the mill has restarted working on the 23rd October, 1967, with a labour force of 1,500 as against the normal strength of 3,300.

#### INTRODUCTION OF JANATA TRAINS

2771. SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that more Janata trains are likely to be introduced in 1968 ; and

(b) if so, the routes and the number thereof ?