

whether the instructions of the Government have been carried out or not.

**SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH :** There is regular checking to ensure that the instructions given by the Government and Oil Companies are adhered to. Distributors are obliged, under the agreement, to maintain trained mechanics for installation work and repair work and make available free technical advice to the customers. The training has to be of standards laid down by the marketing companies. The companies also conduct training courses for them and there are regular checks to see that these mechanics are trained to get the desired standards.

**SHRIMATI KISHORI SINHA :** I would like to know whether the Government has received any complaints that the pin-type valve cylinders are unsafe because the pin tends to come off, leading to leakage. At the same time, I would also like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government are aware that sub-standard LPG cylinders are in circulation and whether ISI (Indian Standards Institution) marking is compulsory for the LPG cylinders. If not, does the Government propose to make it compulsory so as to prevent health hazards?

**SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH :** Sir, with the introduction of self-closing valves and click-on regulators, it is now very simple and easy for housewives to connect the LPG cylinders to the stoves. As far as the question whether ISI standards are being adhered to or not is concerned, the LPG cylinders are procured by the oil companies from the cylinder-manufacturing units after the quality of the cylinders is approved by the ISI and the Chief Controller of the Explosives. In the bottling plant also, i.e. at the filling end, care is taken to see that ISI standard cylinders are utilised. Also, the cylinders are given a water bath to detect any leakage. By these methods, we are trying to ensure that these accidents do not occur. But it has been seen that accidents have occurred because of careless handling and bad maintenance at the end of the customers. I would like to inform the House that Government is

considering the constitution of a Committee headed by a leading public figure to look into this question in all its aspects and suggest measures to ensure that these accidents are minimised and the most rigorous standards are adhered to.

*(Interruptions)*

#### Safeguard in Palmyra tapping occupation

\*857. **SHRI N. DENNIS :** Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the steps taken by Government to safeguard the Palmyra tapping occupation from deterioration; and

(b) whether Government would come forward to protect the persons engaged in Palmyra jaggery production and connected subsidiary occupations with subsidies and loans for purchasing utensils and firewood for the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) and (b) A statement is given below.

#### Statement

(a) and (b) Khadi and Village Industries Commission encourages artisans engaged in Palmyra Tapping occupation to form Co-operatives and Federations. It provides them financial assistance on concessional terms such as for Capital Expenditure for tools, equipment machines, worksheds, etc. It also provides them Working Capital for production and sale as per the prescribed norms. This also covers expenditure on firewood. The loan paid for working capital are repayable in 5 years whereas capital expenditure loans are repayable in 5/10 years depending upon the nature of assets. The loans carry interest at 4% only.

The products of this industry are enjoying exemption from income-tax and excise. KVIC also provides Share Capital Loans to the artisans and members of the societies to enhance their borrowing power apart from providing capital formation loans to registered institutions.

In some cases, assistance is also given directly to individuals.

Steps have also been taken for undertaking research and development in this industry. KVIC has set up Palm Products Research Institute in Madras where training facilities are provided to the artisans, supervisors and other workers.

**SHRI N. DENNIS :** It is a traditional rural industry providing employment and income without investment. This industry is facing declining trend and gradually perishing due to its hazardous nature and lack of encouragement and patronage by the Government of India. Thus those who depend on the industry live below the poverty line. If this industry perishes, the consequences would be creation of several socio-economic problems and if developed, it would solve many problems. May I know whether a separate Board or Commission would be constituted specially for the development and production of palmyra products and for the solution of socio-economic problems of those who are engaged in this industry? What is the total financial assistance disbursed to the artisans annually and the number of beneficiaries thereon?

**SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM :** I totally disagree with the hon. Member when he says that the industry is declining. The production during the Fifth Plan was worth Rs. 19.85 crores and employment 3.72 lakhs. In the Sixth Plan it has increased to Rs. 40.53 crores and 6.25 lakh employment. In the Seventh Plan it is estimated that there will be a production worth Rs. 63 crores and 7 lakh employment. As far as formulation of a separate commission is concerned, we have no proposal at hand. Recently we have received a representation from workers of manufacturing units in Tamil Nadu. We have referred the matter to the Khadi and Village Industries Commission for its comments. A decision will be taken after receiving the comments from them.

**SHRI N. DENNIS :** Palmyra products like fibre, leaves and other palmyra products have tremendous export potentialities.

They have to be protected with enhanced loans, subsidies, equipment, firewood and by implementing beneficial measures like housing, pension and cash benefit relief measures to the victims of accidents. May I know whether long term policies would be evolved for the development of this industry and palmyra workers. The hon. Minister has said about the research work. May I know the details of the research work and the result achieved thereon? Will the research be conducted for preservation of neera, jaggery and other palmyra products and to produce dwarf varieties of trees as in the case of coconut?

**SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM :** A research institute of KVIC is functioning at Madras. A number of research programmes are being undertaken in this Institute—for example, to improve the recovery of sugar from palm syrup, soft drinks from palm syrup, etc. To remove the drudgery involved in palmyra tree climbing, an improvised mechanical device has been fabricated by the Institute.

**MR. SPEAKER :** The Question Hour is over.

**MR. SPEAKER :** There is a short notice question. Dr. Datta Samant—not present.

## WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Assistance to States for infrastructure facilities in district courts

\*847. **SHRI ATAUR RAHMAN :** Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the inadequacy of infrastructure for district courts in the States like Additional District and Subordinate Courts, construction of court buildings and residential quarters for judicial-officers of those courts; and

(b) the steps, if any, taken in this regard during the last five years?