

transmission losses in our country. Therefore, I would like to know that before introducing compulsory audit for the industries, what efforts are being made by the Government to minimise transmission losses ?

SHRI VASANT SATHE : About transmission losses I side what it is a good word for theft.

[English]

Actually it is a theft. Technical loss is hardly 10% to 12%.

[Translation]

But the 21 per cent transmission loss—

[English]

—is mainly on account of theft. That is why we have passed the law in both the Houses and I am.....

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : It is not theft, it is robbery.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : Yes, it is robbery.

[English]

Under that law we hope we will be able to nab the people who are responsible for this kind of theft.

[Translation]

SHRI PRATAP BHANU SHARMA : The hon. Minister has told that there is a gap of 9.6 per cent between the demand and supply. Can, then this loss of 9.6 per cent be made up by prevention of transmission losses and also by energy conservation ? If so, what steps are being taken by the Government in this direction ?

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHTAGI : Sir, it is a very good question.

MR. SPEAKER : And how is the Member ?

AN HON. MEMBER : He is good.

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHTAGI : Even if the losses cannot be made up fully, effort must be made. Several meetings have been arranged in this connection and effort has been made to discuss the issue with the States and certain suggestions were made therein that if our technical organisations are not able to stop transmission losses and distribution losses, at least thefts may be checked adequately. In this connection a proposal has come forward and I feel that with the introduction of our new scheme, transmission losses and theft will be reduced somewhat.

[English]

Proposal to take over Titagarh Paper Mills

@*103. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Union Government have received any proposal from the Government of West Bengal for taking over Titagarh Paper Mills; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) : An All-party Delegation of the Members of the Legislative Assembly of West Bengal, led by the Minister-in-charge, Commerce and Industries, Government of West Bengal, had presented a Memorandum to the Union Minister of Industries on 25th June, 1986, on the problems of paper mills in West Bengal. The Memorandum had *inter-alia* expressed a view that Titagarh Paper Mills should be nationalised by the Government of India. But no formal proposal has been received from the Government of West Bengal in this regard.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Titagarh Paper Mills was one of the old paper mills in our country. I think you have also

@ Postponed question.

used during your childhood that paper produced by this mill. This paper mill used to produce very good quality of paper. The inefficient and corrupt management of Titagarh Paper Mill eroded the vital worth of the company and closed down its Mill No. 2 in Kakinada and it has already declared lock out of its Mill No. 1 at Titagarh. About 5000 workars are now out of employment. A report has been prepared by IDPI which shows that this mill can be viable

The Central Government has also contributed Rs. 36 crores towards its reconstruction and renovation. Sir, in view of all this, may I know from the hon. Minister whether the Government is considering a proposal to take over the management of Titagarh Paper Mills ?

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM : Sir, there is no proposal under consideration of the Central Government for the take over of the management of Titagarh Paper Mills, at present.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Sir, Since it has been closed down and now this management is planning to close down mill No. 1 also, may I know from the hon. Minister whether the Government propose to take steps to reopen the closed mills and to lift the lock-out of mill No. 2 so that these 5,000 workers can be saved ?

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM : Sir, the Guidance Committee has suggested various measures. Firstly they have suggested to hand over the management of this mill to some private management. Efforts were made to interest some of the large houses to take over the management of the company. This, however, did not meet any fruitful result. Subsequently, a rehabilitation scheme was also worked out by IDBI based on closure of mill No. 2 and operation of mills No. 1 and 3. The scheme envisaged induction of a new promoter who would be agreeable to invest equity funds to the order of Rs. 10 crores in the rehabilitation programme.

The rehabilitation scheme was considered at the Guidance Committee meeting held on May 28, 1986 when it was *inter*

alia decided that the possibility of unit No. 3 being taken over by the State Government be explored and IRBI should examine it. IDBI had accordingly arranged for a discussion with the representatives of the IRBI and the Government of Orissa in the matter. And also, if the Government of West Bengal comes forward to take over the mill according to the Gujarat formula, we are prepared to assist-all help.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Will you provide financial assistance also ?

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM : If they come forward with the Gujarat formula, what the Gujarat Government did, we are prepared to assist them.

SHRI AMAL DATTA : What the Gujarat Government did, you will approve. But what we want to do, you will not approve, wonderful ?

SHRI BRAJAMOHAN MOHANTY : I would like to know whether the Government have any information that the management of Chaudwar unit in Orissa is planning to lock-out unit No. 3 and if so, what is the reaction of the Government ?

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM : As far as this unit No. 3 is concerned, it is working well. There is no question of closing down.

SHRI BRAJAMOHAN MOHANTY : They are attempting to declare lock-out that unit. Do you have any information, and if so, what is the reaction ?

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM : I have no information so far.

SHRI BRAJAMOHAN MOHANTY : Kindly check up.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Sir, I am sure the Minister is aware of the fact that the Titagarh Paper Mills company was one of the prestigious units in this paper industry which had a good name not only in this country but in export markets also for making various quality brands of paper. He said, as I understood him, they are

looking for big industrial houses to take over. It was one of these big industrial houses, Burn and Company, which was in charge of Titagarh Paper Mills, which was responsible for bringing it into the present position and making it sick and then, locking up. So, I would like to know from the Minister, in view of the paper seortage in this country particularly, why should the Central Government not be more interested in getting these units back into operation so that production of scarce paper can be resumed, instead of looking for some another big house to come and take it over? Have they no interest in the paper production?

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM : Sir, as it is, there is no shortage of paper, at present.

I have already answered that if the Government of West Bengal come forward with the Gujarat formula, we are prepared to assist them.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI : The hon. Minister has said that the scheme of rehabilitation by the IRBI is in progress. I would like to know in view of the fact that there is a provision in the Sick Companies Act which was recently enacted by this House that if an industrial house has made the industry sick, you can prosecute the industrial house for siphoning of the funds and making the industry sick. Has Government taken any action under it?

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM : The Board has not yet been constituted. As soon as the Board is constituted, the formalities will be framed.

WRITTEN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Selling Price of Imported Edible Oils

*205. **SHRI BHARAT KUMAR ODEDRA :** Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state :

(a) the reasons and justification for buying edible Oils from foreign countries at cheap rates but selling them at high price within the country;

(b) whether it is proposed to cut down the high prices of edible oils; and

(c) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT) : (a) The issue price of imported edible oils is kept at a reasonable level because keeping the sale price at a low level will depress indigenous oil prices unduly and will act as a disincentive to domestic production which needs to be increased to achieve Government's policy of self-sufficiency. The wide gap between prices of imported and indigenous edible oils might also run the risk of malpractices as imported edible oils may leak into unauthorised channels.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The reasons are given in (a) above.

Cooking Gas for Rural Areas

*206. **SHRI H. B. PATIL :** Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that people living in urban areas have been benefited systematically so far as the question of cooking gas is concerned whereas the people living in rural areas have been deprived of this facility;

(b) if so, whether Government have framed any scheme to give this facility to the people, particularly Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections of society, living in the rural areas; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHMA DUTT) : (a) Historically, LPG was introduced as a domestic fuel in major towns close to