

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 shortage 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 poorer 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