

from Messrs Pneumatic (India), Calcutta. The machinery applied for by the parties was procured from Messrs Pneumatic (India) Calcutta and supplied to the applicants by the National Small Industries Corporation Limited. The Corporation later learnt that the prices of machinery supplied were highly inflated and that the machinery was unfit for the purpose for which it was purchased.

The matter was reported by the National Small Industries Corporation Limited to the CBI who are investigating the matter.

#### **Production of Cement**

\*122. SHRI VARKEY GEORGE: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) the total production of cement during the year 1973-74;

(b) the total domestic demand during this period and how much was exported ; and

(c) the steps taken to augment the production of cement to meet fully the domestic demand as well as export obligations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI B. P. MAURYA): (a) to (c). The total production of cement during 1973-74 was 14.61 million tonnes. Out of this, a quantity of 1,30,246 tonnes of cement was exported and the rest consumed in the country. According to an estimate made by the Task Force on Cement Industry for the Fifth Five Year Plan, the total demand for cement in the year 1973-74 was of the order of 19 million tonnes.

In order to maximise availability of cement out of the existing capacity, rail movement of cement is regularly scrutinised with a view to extending

such assistance as may be possible, to the factories facing movement difficulties. A Standing Linkage Committee on coal has been established under the Department of Coal in the Ministry of Energy and various cement factories have been linked to the different coal fields after assessing their coal requirements. A Monitoring Cell has been established at Calcutta to review every 10 days the supplies of coal to various cement factories. A Cell has also been established in this Ministry to remove bottlenecks in movement of coal to cement factories. The factories which did not receive adequate supplies of coal were specifically permitted by the Government to use furnace oil with a view to achieve higher utilization of capacity.

With a view to set up additional capacity, licences and letters of intent for an additional capacity 20.25 million tonnes have been issued. Out of this, a capacity of 1.86 million tonnes is likely to materialise by the end of 1975.

#### **Conversion of P.T.I. into a Public Corporation**

\*125. SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether a final decision has been taken to convert P.T.I. into a public corporation;

(b) if not, the reason for the delay; and

(c) when a decision is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): (a) to (c). The question of conversion of news agencies into Public Corporation is being examined after the question of delinking of newspapers from big business interests has been considered by Government.