

tion of that Government. These proposals, if and when implemented, will provide rail-link with the Indian Railways through the Pakistani Railways.

SHRI R. S. PANDEY: Sir, today in the newspapers a news item has appeared that India has been awarded Rs. 200 crore contract from Iran. I would like to know whether it is true. If so, what are the details?

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI: Sir, whatever the news, the news agency has indulged in wild guessing. It has no foundation.

SHRI M. S. SANJEEVI RAO: Sir, I am sure the hon. Minister is aware today a lot of time is taken for travelling to middle-east countries and Iran. With this background will the Minister think seriously of starting alternative route not only to Iran but to middle-east countries by giving priority to establish rail link as quickly as possible?

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI: This can be done on bilateral basis between the two governments. As and when any Government desires to discuss the matter with the Indian railways, we are ready. We have already started discussing with Iran and Iraq governments and the discussions are going on.

SHRI BIBHUTI MISHRA: Sir, the Minister has used the words 'if and when'. May I know the definition or duration of 'if and when'?

श्री मुहम्मद शफी कुरेशी : माननीय सचिव ने ठीक जवाब दिया है। पाकिस्तान के साथ हम ने रेल लिंक कायम करना चाहा, लेकिन बारह बरस तक वह इस पर रजामंद नहीं हुआ। इस सूरत में हम क्या करते? हमारी तरफ से आफर भी लेकिन वह नहीं चाहता था। जब उसने भी चाहा, तो वह रेल लिंक कायम हो गया। यह बाइलेट्रल काम है। कुछ वे चलें, कुछ हम चलें; तभी

काम चलेगा। एक तरफ के चलने से काम नहीं हो सकता है।

DR. RANEN SEN: Sir, when there are many parts of India without rail link on account of which trade and industry cannot develop, why is it found necessary by the Government of India to spend money for rail link with Iran and Iraq where we can go by ship?

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI: Sir, it is part of our industrial and economic development that we have to establish links with other countries. After all we cannot trade within ourselves. We have to trade with other countries. There is also a proposal of the United Nations for an Asian Railway System.

Arrest of Cooking Gas Dealers

*292. **SHRI R. K. SINHA:** Will the Minister of PETROLEUM be pleased to state:

(a) whether some cooking gas dealers in Delhi and other parts of the country have recently been arrested for selling gas cylinders with less quantity of gas; and

(b) if so, the action proposed to be taken against such gas dealers?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM (SHRI K. D. MALAVIYA): (a) and (b). Checking of 57 Liquefied Petroleum Gas dealers was done by the Civil Supplies Department of the Delhi Administration on the 2nd and 3rd August, 1976. Irregularities such as discrepancies in the daily stock register and non-display of prices and stocks were found in 12 cases against whom F.I.Rs. were lodged under the Defence of India Rules. In one case, one gas cylinder was found to be having 7 Kgs. less. According to the information available with the oil companies, no arrests of LPG dealers for the supply of underfilled cylinders have been made in other States.

SHRI R. K. SINHA: Sir, the press report says that there have been extensive shortage of weight in the gas cylinders supplied to the people. Shri O. P. Behl, Executive Councillor said in a press statement that the cylinders would be required to be sealed before being issued because in one case the weight was less by 6 kgs. This happened in 55 cases. What steps the Minister proposes to take to remove this mal-practice which has been found in a few cases? This mal-practice might be prevalent on a big scale as well.

SHRI K. D. MALAVIYA: Our attention was drawn by Mr Bahl as well as by reports received from some other parts of the country that there were cases here and there of underweight filling. These underfillings were brought to our notice, but they are not as large in numbers as has been made out. Government are trying to find out ways and means to stop it. One of the methods is to formulate a sealing method or device which cannot be opened by anybody unless the whole gas is exhausted. As soon as this system is formulated and finalised, I suppose this underfilling will be stopped.

SHRI R. K. SINHA: One of the ways to stop this, which the Minister may example, is to award exemplary punishment to such people who indulge in this practice. This is one of the ways of filling the gas cylinder. What is the Minister's reaction to this?

SHRI K. D. MALAVIYA: We have been trying to repress and suppress such abuses. Strict action has been taken. We are vigilant towards the whole matter. I agree that whenever such cases are found out, very drastic action should be taken, and it is taken.

श्री इसहाक मन्जली : नर्थ रेवेन्यू में, जहाँ मैं रहता हूँ ग्राम तौर पर यह शिकायत मिलती है कि गैस आनी है और बहुत जल्द खतम हो जाती है। कम्पोज यह

है कि क्या सिलिंडर पर इस बात का कोई इन्तजाम नहीं है कि [] यह पता चल सके कि जो सिलिंडर धाया उस में गैस पूरी है, कम है, या कितनी है। मिनिस्टर साहब ने एक बड़ी उम्मीद दिलाने वाली और हीसला बढ़ाने वाली बात कही है, जिस के लिए हम उन के गुरुगजार हैं। उन्होंने कहा है कि इस के लिए कुछ इन्तजाम सोचा जा रहा है और कम गस सप्लाई करने वालों को पनिशमेंट दी जायेगी। मैं इस बारे में दो सजेगन्ज देना चाहता हूँ। क्या यह नहीं हो सकता है कि सरकार उन गैस सिलिंडर सप्लाई करने वालों को इस बात के लिए पाबन्द करे कि वे मिलिंडर पर मीटर लगायें? ईमानदार लोगों को मीटर लगाने में कोई बड़ी परेशानी नहीं हो सकती है। दूसरे, जब तक मीटर मिस्टम इन्ट्रोड्यूम हो या सरकार कोई और मिस्टम अपनाये; क्या तब तक यह नहीं किया जा सकता है कि सरकार कुछ अपने तौर पर कम्पनियों में इस्पू होने वाले सिलिंडरों की वक्तन-फवक्तन जांच करे, और खाम तौर पर बगर इत्तिला के उन की जांच की जाये, ताकि बड़े पैमाने पर होने वाली इन चोरी को रोका जा सके ?

श्री के० डी० मालवीय : इन चलते-फिरने सिलिंडरों में मीटर लगाना अभी पासिबल नहीं है। मिलिंडर तो कन्ज्यूमर को सप्लाई किया जाता है। उस में मीटर लगाने का कोई इन्तजाम नहीं हो सकता है। मिलिंडर को इस तरह से सील करने का इन्तजाम सोचा जा रहा है कि उस में गैस खरे जाने के बाद उस को कोई तोड़ न सके, और जब गैस खत्म हो जाये, तो मालूम हो जाये। हम उसकी कोशिश में हैं और हम ने इस प्राबलम को करीब-करीब साल्व कर लिया है। लेकिन यह सही है कि अक्सर शौकात कन्ज्यूमर्स को इण्डर-फिल्ड सिलिंडरों की सप्लाई होती है। हम बरुबर इस की जांच पड़ताल करने हैं। जो लोग पकड़े जाते हैं,

उन को सफा मिलती है। लेकिन जब बरतब नोनों को एक घण्टा पड़ जाती है, तो उस को सत्रेस करना नुशिकल हो जाता है। इस बारे में सख्त से सख्त सत्रा देने का खयाल किया जा रहा है। इस नीके पर मैं सदन को यह आशवासन देना चाहता हूँ कि गवर्नमेंट को यह पोखीशन अच्छी तरह मालूम है। इस सिलसिले में जो भी सख्त से सख्त तरीका होगा, वह अपनाया जायेगा।

श्री इस्लामक सम्मेली : मिनिस्टर साहब जा कर खुद बैक करें। फुरीनी साहब ने खुद बकिंग कर के बिदाउट टिकट ड्रैबलिंग को बहुत कम कर दिया है। |

DR. H. P. SHARMA: May I submit that the pilferage is on a much wider scale than the Minister has accepted? So till you evolve a seal design, will you make it "mandatory that they should have scales to weigh the cylinder? That is one method by which you can prevent pilferage.

SHRI K. D. MALAVIYA: We have notified the specified weight of both the cylinder and gas.

DR. H. P. SHARMA: Where?

SHRI K. D. MALAVIYA: To every consumer. They know it. But the difficulty is that this evil practice has spread. We hope very soon we will be able to find out a seal and then this would stop.

SHRI RAJA KULKARNI: With less quantity in the cylinder, the question arises; who fills in the cylinder? According to my information dealers are not concerned with filling the cylinder and if there is less quantity, it shows lack of supervision in the refineries where the cylinders are filled. Will the hon. Minister explain whether the dealers are not connected with less

quantity of gas in the cylinder and whether it is due to lack of proper supervision at the refinery that this is happening?

SHRI K. D. MALAVIYA: I totally deny this charge because whenever cylinders are filled, they are checked. What happens is that the distributor quickly exchanges it informally; it is given to somebody informally and then some gas is consumed. This evil practice is known to us and a good part of it has been suppressed. As soon as a new seal is discovered, this evil practice would top completely.

SHRI DINESH JOARDER: Apart from less quantity of gas being supplied, in cities like Calcutta, there is non availability of gas and customers do not get, after sending in a requisition, for ten or twelve days. Dealers are distributed in such a way that a large part of the area is to be covered by one single dealer and thus he is not able to supply gas to so many customers at a time. Apart from that, would the government adopt the policy of expanding the supply of gas to district headquarters and semi-urban and rural areas also because the cost of coal is going up and people are not able to get coal in the district headquarters?

SHRI K. D. MALAVIYA: First of all I must submit to the House that LP gas is in shortage; there is a shortage of production of this gas; it will be only proportionate to the quantity of crude oil that we could get and refine in our refineries. In West Bengal there was shortage of LPG. Over and above that there is shortage of cylinders also. Recently Haldia has started producing some more quantity of LPG and we hope the situation in Bengal would improve as a result of the greater supply of LPG. We are also trying to hasten the supply of cylinders from Bombay and elsewhere where it is manufactured but the total manufacturing capacity of cylinders is not quite adequate.

Expansion and Diversification of Drug Firms

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*293. DR. RANEN SEN:
SHRIMATI PARVATHI
KRISHNAN;

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the scheme, if any, drawn for expansion and diversification of foreign and Indian drug manufacturing companies;

(b) what concrete steps have been taken to implement that scheme; and

(c) what is the response of foreign drug companies towards the scheme?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI C. P. MAJHI):

(a) to (c). Keeping in view the recommendations of the Committee on Drugs and Pharmaceuticals a new drug policy, to achieve a systematic and balanced growth of the drugs industry, is being evolved. In the meantime, two of the important recommendations of the Committee relating to the production programme—viz., (i) identification of bulk drugs required for production of 117 essential formulations, listed by the Committee, and (ii) assigning relevant lines of production for the public sector, Indian sector and open to all, including the foreign sector has been drawn up and made known to the industry. Government expects good response from all the sectors of the drugs industry after the total drug policy has been announced. From 1-4-1975, as many as 128 applications, including 22 applications from foreign companies with foreign equity exceeding 40 per cent, have been received.

DR. RANEN SEN: In view of the fact that the government does not appear to accept one of the main recommendations of that committee, namely, taking over of multi-national corporations in the drugs and pharmaceutical industry, may I know whether any

pressure or persuasion is being exercised on the multinational corporations who up till now were only producing low tonnage high value medicines, neglecting the development of medicines for certain types of tropical diseases which are not found all over the world? May I know whether this is being done so that the multi-national corporations may go into diversification of production of such medicines which are required for leprosy, etc.?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILISERS (SHRI P. C. SETHI): The hon. member was a member of the Hathi Committee. I congratulate him and the Hathi Committee for the good work they have done in analysing the problems. But while suggesting remedies, you have mixed up many things and created more confusion than was prevailing before. Therefore, please do not think that it was a court award. It was a committee appointed for our guidance. You have submitted the report and we are examining it. Please do not jump to any far-reaching conclusion. The report of the committee is yet to be taken up for consideration by the Cabinet sub-committee.

DR. RANEN SEN: I never asked whether the recommendations are being implemented or not. I wanted to know whether the foreign companies are being persuaded or pressurised to go into the research of drugs which are necessary for our tropical diseases like leprosy. That was my simple question

SHRI P. C. SETHI. The hon. member did make a remark that it is presumed that government is not going to accept the recommendations of nationalisation of multi-nationals. Hence I had to give that preamble to my answer. As far as leukoderma and leprosy are concerned, I would like the hon. member to visit the Hamdard Dawakhana where they have found a complete cure for these diseases. They have progressed very well and I had occasion to visit it a couple of days ago. So far