

tatives from the Industry, labour and Government of West Bengal.

- (iv) In order to discipline the prices and check hoarding tendency, maximum prices at appropriate levels have been fixed for different categories of raw jute.
- (v) Special efforts have been made to augment the production of raw jute by improving the yield in selected areas.

#### **Crises faced by Hand Processors of Textile**

\*602. DR. VASANT KUMAR PANDIT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether hand processors of textile are facing financial difficulty and are on the verge of closing down;

(b) whether due to the differential duty on power processors the economy of hand processors has been grossly affected;

(c) whether Maharashtra Vastra Hasta Dhulai Rangai Sangh has approached Government to solve this problem; and

(d) the steps Government propose to take to stop closure of this Man Power Small Industry?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI MOHAN DHARIA):

(a) to (d). There is no information regarding the closure of hand processing units. The differential in the excise duty between the hand processed cloth and the power processed cloth was considerably narrowed down in the budget proposals for the year 1977-78. A number of representations were received on behalf of hand processors including from Maharashtra Vastra Hasta Dhulai Rangai Sangh against

the overall excise duty reduction on power processed cloth. It was represented that such reduction of excise duty would adversely affect the hand processors. As per the amended Finance Bill now passed by Lok Sabha, the duty differential between the hand processed and independent power processed cloth, which was existing before 1-4-77 has been more than restored to protect the interest of the hand processors.

#### **Coffee cultivation in North Eastern Areas**

\*603. SHRI D. D. DESAI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Coffee Board has decided to encourage Coffee cultivation in North-Eastern areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the benefits expected from this cultivation in the context of the world market for coffee?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI MOHAN DHARIA):

(a) The Coffee Board in collaboration with the National Council of Applied Economic Research has drawn up a Plan to bring an additional area of 14,000 hectares of land under coffee in the North-Eastern Part of the country.

(b) Coffee Board's report indicates that it should be possible to bring the following additional areas under coffee cultivation:—

Assam	.	.	8000 Hectares
Maghalaya	.	.	2000 Hectares
Mizoram	.	.	1000 Hectares
Nagaland	.	.	1000 Hectares
Manipur	.	.	1000 Hectares
Arunachal Pradesh	.	.	1000 Hectares