

their equity capital not exceeding 74 per cent. The time limit for this purpose expires towards the end of this year in most cases and in the first half of next year in other cases.

(b) and (c) The Bank's directives are statutory in nature and the companies are submitting their proposals in this regard.

Demand for Nationalisation of Closed Jute Mills

*285. SHRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to take over the management of some of the closed jute mills in Calcutta;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether the trade unions in this field have demanded full nationalisation of these mills instead of taking over only their management; and

(d) if so, the Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI MOHAN DHARIA): (a) and (b). Management of two closed jute mills, namely, Khardah Co. Ltd and Union Jute Mills has been taken over by the Government on 16th May, 1977.

(c) and (d). No proposal to nationalise these mills is under consideration at present.

Performance of National Textile Corporation

*287. SHRI S. G. MURUGAIYAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the performance of the National Textile Corporation has been found to be unsatisfactory; and

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the measures proposed to be taken to improve the performance?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI MOHAN DHARIA): (a) and (b). Taking into account the problems inherited by the National Textile Corporation, namely, obsolescence of machinery, surplus labour etc., the Government does not consider the performance of the National Textile Corporation on the whole as unsatisfactory. Important steps taken by the Corporation to improve the working of the mills are as follows:—

(i) modernisation/renovation of the machinery;

(ii) rationalisation of surplus labour;

(iii) bulk procurement of raw material on centralised basis;

(iv) diversification in the pattern of production; and

(v) changes in the marketing strategy.

Price Freeze

*288. SHRI P. THIAGARAJAN: SHRI M. N. GOVINDAN NAIR:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the reported understanding among the industrialists to agree to a voluntary price freeze of commodities has been implemented;

(b) the probable value of the commodities involved as a proportion of the total value outside the price freeze;

(c) whether Government have taken up the question of securing the price freeze at a much lower level; and

(d) if so, the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND CO-OPERATION (SHRI MOHAN DHARIA): (a) There was an announcement in the Press that a number of industrialists located at Bombay and Calcutta decided voluntarily not to increase the prices of the products produced by them till December 31, 1977, except in the case of loss-making units. The statement added that efforts would be made by them to absorb any increases in input costs as far as possible unless such cost increases became very high.

(b) Considering the range and diversity of the products that may be covered by the price-freeze, it may not be possible to arrive at an estimate of their value and its proportion to the total value of goods produced and sold.

(c) and (d) At a meeting with representatives of industry and trade, political parties and trade unions held on June 7, 1977, leading business houses were told that the endeavour should be to lower the existing prices instead of freezing them at the existing level.

झालावाड़ में अफीम शोधनशाला

* 289. श्री जगुर्भुज : क्या बिस्व तथा राजस्व और बैंकिंग मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि क्या सरकार का विचार अफीम की काश्त में अग्रणी किन्तु आर्थिक दृष्टि से पिछड़े हुए झालावाड़ जिले में कोई अफीम शोधन-शाला स्थापित करने का है ?

बिस्व तथा राजस्व और बैंकिंग मंत्री (श्री एच० एम० पटेल) : फिलहाल न तो झालावाड़ में और न ही किसी अन्य स्थान पर अफीम शोधन संयंत्र स्थापित करने का कोई प्रस्ताव है। परन्तु मध्य प्रदेश तथा राजस्थान के पोस्ट उगाने वाले क्षेत्रों में अफीम के बीरा अनाये नये डोरो से ऐस्कलाइड निकालने के लिये एक संयंत्र स्थापित करने के प्रस्ताव

पर विचार किया जा रहा है। संयंत्र के स्थान-निर्धारण के बारे में अभी अन्तिम निर्णय नहीं किया गया है।

1. Demands of Pilots of Indian Airlines and Air Corporation Employees Union

*290. SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the pilots of Indian Airlines and Air Corporation Employees Union have threatened to go on strike if their demands are not met soon;

(b) if so, what are their demands;

(c) how many of their demands have been accepted by Government; and

(d) the reasons for their strike?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PURUSHOTTAM KAUSHIK): (a) While the pilots of Indian Airlines have not threatened to go on strike, a notice dated 3rd June, 1977 was received by Indian Airlines from the Air Corporations Employees' Union proposing to call a strike with effect from 20th June, 1977. As a result, the Regional Labour Commissioner, Kanpur was to initiate conciliation proceedings with both the parties on 18th June, 1977. However, the Air Corporations Employees' Union in the meantime expressed a desire to resume bilateral discussions with the management and these discussions are now in progress, the conciliation proceedings having been kept in abeyance.

(b) The demands of the Air Corporations Employees' Union relate to review of alleged cases of victimisation, greater promotional avenues to employees, shift pattern, transfer policy, staff strength and other general conditions of service.