

the hon. Minister whether assistance would be given for recommissioning this mill within a stipulated period? If not, the reasons therefor?

[English]

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM : As you know, Sir, the Ashok Paper Mill is closed for the past five years. It has been referred to B.I.F.R. It is going into it. We are waiting for the decision of B.I.F.R.

[Translation]

PROF. CHANDRA BHANU DEVI : Barauni is the most important industrial centre in Bihar where the country's largest refinery, fertiliser and thermal plants are located. More than half of the small scale units there are lying closed on account of shortage of power and other essential raw materials. Will the hon. Minister make necessary arrangements to supply adequate power and raw materials to these units?

[English]

SHRI J. VENGAL RAO : It is the State Government's duty. They have not supplied power to these units. Bihar is deficit in power.

DR. G. S. RAJHANS : During the last three years, I have raised the question of Ashok Paper Mills not less than a dozen times; and every time I was promised that the mill was likely to be opened very shortly. This is a sort of an evasive posture. May I know definitely when does the Government propose to open this mill?

SHRI J. VENGAL RAO : There are two Ashok Paper Mills—one is in Bihar, and the other is in Assam. Both are joint companies. Recently, the Chief Minister of Assam, and the Chief Minister of Bihar came to an understanding. Now it is before the BIFR.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : The country is facing a very alarming situation due to sick industrial units. We want a full discussion, Sir. It depends on you, (Interruptions)

I want a good medicine from the Minister of Industry. We do not want

nitrogen from him; we want oxygen from him, Sir, through you (Interruptions) Let me say that this is a very important question. (Interruptions) I know it is not the Government's policy to take over sick industrial units. But when this industry is going to be closed, management will not suffer. But the workers are suffering like anything. Two lakh workers are now starving for lack of food I would request the Minister to tell us whether he has got any proposal to review the whole situation, and do something for the working class and to rehabilitate them, to enable them to survive. I want an assurance from the Minister, not any bad medicine or nitrogen from him.

SHRI J. VENGAL RAO : Sir, her question is about West Bengal. The question is about Bihar. Another question will be coming today about the specific State. I will then answer it.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : I am not talking about West Bengal, but about the whole country.

MR. SPEAKER : Question 189—Mrs Jayanti Patnaik is not here. Question 190 Mr. Subhash Yadav and Shri Prakash Chandra are not available. Question 191—Dr. Vijaya Rama Rao is not here. Now Question 192—Shri Jagdish Awasthi.

[Translations]

National Consumers Redressal Commission

*192. **SHRI JAGDISH AWASTHI :** Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have set up a National Consumers Redressal Commission;

(b) if so, the terms of reference and the procedures to be followed by the Commission;

(c) the categories of consumers whose interests will be protected by this Commission; and

(d) the arrangements made by the Commission to protect the interests of daily wage workers and farmers?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI SUKH RAM) : (a) to (d). A Statement is given below.

Statement

(a) The Central Government is in process of setting up the National Commission.

(b) The National Commission shall have Original, Appellate and Revisionary Jurisdictions. It shall entertain complaints where the value of goods or services any compensation, if any claimed, exceeds Rs. 10 lakhs. It shall have Appellate and Revisionary Jurisdictions against the order of the State Commissions. It shall decide consumers' disputes relating to defective goods or services, unreasonable prices charged in excess of statutorily fixed prices or displayed prices on goods and packages and unfair trade practices of business houses other than the large industrial houses covered under the MRTP Act, 1969. The Act applies to the enterprises/organisations of all sectors including public and private sectors. "A complaint for loss or injury suffered under the Act can be filed by any consumer or any registered voluntary consumer organisation or Central or State Government". The Commission has also been vested with powers of the Civil Court under the code of Civil Procedure for purposes of summoning and examining the witnesses, evidences, etc. The procedures prescribed under the Consumer Protection Rules are simple and speedy.

(c) and (d). A complaint for loss or injury suffered can be filed under the Act by any consumer including daily wage workers, farmers or any registered voluntary consumer organisation or Central or State Government.

[Translation]

SHRI JAGDISH AWASTHI : Sir, it is not clear from the hon. Minister's statement as to what powers would be

vested in the National Commission which is going to be set up by the Central Government, and whether it will have appellate powers also? Besides, it has not been clarified as to who will be the members of the Commission and whether non-Government members will also be there in it? I would also like to know the time by which this commission would be set up?

SHRI SUKH RAM : Mr. Speaker, Sir, there will be five members in this National Commission. The Chairman will be a sitting or retired judge of the Supreme Court and we have already selected him. A notification in this regard will be issued shortly. Besides, there will be four other members. One of them will be a lady member. We are screening their bio-datas at the moment. We want that such persons should be selected who fulfill the required qualifications. I hope that this Commission will be set up soon.

SHRI JAGDISH AWASTHI : Does the Government propose to reduce the prices of consumer items? If so, what steps have been taken in this regard, so that the interests of the common people are protected?

SHRI SUKH RAM : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this law has been enacted for the benefit of the common consumers. So far as the rules are concerned, they have also been framed to serve the interests of consumers. In this connection, a consumers' council has been set up at the Central level. Similar councils have been constituted at the State level as well. These councils have been set up in 20 states so far. The meeting of the Central Consumer Council was held in September last and the second meeting is to be held on 16th of March. Besides, the meeting of State Ministers of Civil Supplies has also been held. We have written to the States to set up State Consumers' Councils at the earliest. The forums to be established at the State and district level would be quasi-judicial. It has already been set up in Bihar and yesterday only, I sanctioned such a council for Arunachal Pradesh. We have written to other States also in this regard.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Ran Bahadur Singh. Absent.

Dr. A.K. Patel. Absent.

Shri C. Janga Reddy. Absent.

Shri Mohd. Mahfooz Ali Khan. Absent

SHRI SURESH KURUP : You should impose a fine.

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Ranjit Singh Gaekwad.

Setting up of New Refineries

+

*196. SHRI RANJIT SINGH
GAEKWAD :

DR. CHANDRA SHEKHAR
TRIPATHI :

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have planned to set up new refineries to achieve the desired refining capacities by 2000 A.D. ;

(b) if so, whether the petroleum production is likely to increase and the refining capacities raised in the country by 2000 A.D.; and

(c) the details of the perspective plan for setting up new refineries and the expansion of the existing ones ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHMA DUTT) : (a) to (c). A Statement is given below.

Statement

A new 6.0 MTPA refinery is being set up at Karnal. A new refinery is also proposed to be set up in Assam. A detailed project report is being prepared for a 3.0 MTPA refinery at Mangalore. Capacity of the Mathura refinery is being raised from 6 MTPA to 7.5 MTPA and that of the Koyali Refinery from 7.3 MTPA to 9.5 MTPA.

The currently estimated demand of petroleum products by 2000 A.D. is expected to be of the order of 90 to 95 million tonnes. Additional refining capacities required will be considered on various techno-economic factors including the demand supply balance and availability of crude oil based on special studies in this regard.

SHRI RANJIT SINGH GAEKWAD : The petroleum industry is fast developing all over the globe, particularly in our country also. A lot of work has been done for finding new areas, especially on the Western coast.

I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government is going to set up a second refinery on the Western border of the country.

SHRI BRAHMA DUTT : At present, we are planning to set up two refineries, one in Karnal and another in Assam. A detailed project report is to be prepared for Mangalore. In Eighth Plan, we will have to plan for more refineries—south, north, east, west—all depending on the consumption pattern and we are doing that exercise if, when and where it is required. Because the demand is increasing very fast, we will have to see that we create enough refineries to meet the demand.

SHRI RANJIT SINGH GAEKWAD : Sir, in the answer, it is stated that the capacity of the existing refineries are being increased.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Will the House come to order please ? No talking here. Order.

SHRI RANJIT SINGH GAEKWAD : Nobody seems to be interested in petroleum..(Interruptions)

MR SPEAKER : They are interested in burning it out.

AN HON. MEMBER : All are interested in cooking gas.

SHRI RANJIT SINGH GAEKWAD : I would just like to know whether the Government would reconsider the decision and give preference to Gujarat in regard