

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item to the effect that the multi-crore pharmaceutical industry will be allowed to fleece the sick of the country for a few months more appearing in the *Blitz* of the 19th November, 1977 under the caption 'Fraud on the sick'; and

(b) if so, what action Government propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA): (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Hathi Committee have made various recommendations some of which concern the regulation of the activities of foreign drug companies. Immediately on assumption of office by the Minister in March, 1977, a fresh directive was issued for the most expeditious examination of various recommendations made by the Hathi Committee, keeping in view the large number of representations received from the drug manufacturers and other related associations as well as individual manufacturers on the role of the various sectors, licensing and pricing policy etc. A series of discussions were held with the following drug manufacturers' and other associations:—

(i) Organisation of Pharmaceuticals Producers of India (OPPI).

(ii) All India Manufacturers' Association (AIMO).

(iii) Indian Pharmaceuticals Manufacturers Association (IPMA).

(iv) Indran Drugs Manufacturers Association (IDMA).

(v) Pharmaceuticals and Allied Manufacturers Association (PAM-DAL).

(vi) Indian Medical Association (IMA); and

(vii) All Indian Chemists and Druggists Association.

A series of inter-Ministerial meetings were also held subsequently to review all points of view.

A special meeting of the Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers was convened exclusively on 5-11-1977 to discuss in depth the recommendations of the Hathi Committee.

All the suggestions and view-points emanating from various sources have been before the Government. It would thus be seen that a very elaborate report containing scores of complicated recommendations with infinite ramifications on the entire gamut of the Drug industry in India on which a decision could not be taken by the predecessor Government had to be processed and the final decisions are likely to be taken very soon.

Film entitled "Too late" produced by the Southern Railway employees

*719. SHRI U. R. KRISHNAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some employees of the Southern Railway had produced a film entitled "Too late" about 25 years ago;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Southern Railway did not use the film and that it was partially destroyed by the negligence of an officer; and

(c) if so, whether Government propose to remake the damaged portion of the film for public exhibition?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHEO NARAIN): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) No, Sir.

A 35 mm film entitled "Too late" was, however, produced in 1955 by the Railwaymen's Fine Arts Society, Chetpat RS, Madras in Tamil and in Hindi.

(b) At the request of the Railwaymen's Fine Arts Society, the Railway Board agreed to purchase both Hindi and Tamil versions of the film with all its rights. The film was thereupon taken over by the Southern Railway in March, 1957 and a proper sale agreement between the Southern Railway and the Society was executed in August, 1958. Pending finalisation of the agreement the entire film material was kept stored by the Southern Railway. When the film was checked after the finalisation of the agreement it was found that a part of it had been damaged. On a complaint from the General Secretary, Railwaymen's Fine Arts Society, the General Manager, Southern Railway, ordered an enquiry to be conducted by a senior railway officer. The officer came to the conclusion that rain water from an unprecedented heavy downpour entered the room in which the box was kept and damaged the film. Suitable action was taken against the staff held responsible for negligence contributing to the damage to the film.

(c) No, Sir. According to the expert opinion of the Films Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting the film is completely damaged and not even a single frame can be salvaged. The question of remaking the damaged portion, therefore, does not arise.

Oil Exploration off the Kerala Coast

*720. SHRI S. KUMARAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred question 547 given in the Raya Sabha on the 28th November, 1977 and state:

(a) whether Government have decided to start the exploration for oil off the Kerala Coast in January next year; and

(b) if so, what measures are being taken towards this end?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA): (a) and (b) A statement is placed on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) and (b) Broad reconnaissance surveys of the Continental shelf in the Arabian sea including portions of Kerala coast were conducted in 1964 and 1973. Seismic surveys were carried out by Oil and Natural Gas Commission in Kerala offshore off Kasargod early this year. During the last two months reconnaissance survey have been carried out in Kerala offshore continental shelf adjoining Cape Comarin to Calicut. A regional seismic profile connecting these two areas has also been carried out. Preliminary interpretation of seismic data collected off Kasargod has just been completed. Further action would depend on the results of the interpretation of the seismic data.

Cases of chain pulling in railway trains

1241. SHRI VITHAL GADGIL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases of pulling of alarm chains in the railway trains which took place during the six-months' period preceding and following the 1st April, 1977.

(b) whether there has been an increase in pulling of alarm chains during the last six months; and

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHEO NARAIN): (a) to (c) During the period October, 1976 to March, 1977, the alarm chain in trains was pulled 30,557