

(b) whether Government are aware that the claimants are threatened by the proprietors whenever they claim their amounts; and

(c) if so, whether Government propose to make any enquiry into the affairs of Bijlee Chit Fund, now defunct?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI): (a) to (c) Chit Funds in Delhi are governed by the Madras Chit Funds Act, 1961 as extended to the Union Territory of Delhi. Reserve Bank of India has reported that on enquiries made from the registrar of Chit Funds Delhi, it is understood that no chit fund by the name Bijlee Chit Fund, G. B. Road, Delhi is registered with him and that no complaint has been received by him so far against it.

MULTINATIONAL ORGANISATION OF LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES FOR COFFEE

1206. SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHA-PATRO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Latin American Coffee producing Countries have decided to form a multinational organisation to fix just prices for the production; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI V. P. SINGH): (a) and (b) It is reported that certain coffee producing American countries have decided to establish a new Multinational Company with the object of obtaining higher prices for coffee from the world market. Further details about the proposed company are yet to be known before Government could consider the implications.

U. S. MISSION TO INDIA

1207. SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHA-PATRO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a U.S. Special trade mission is to visit India during the first half of December, 1974; and

(b) if so the details and objectives thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI V. P. SINGH): (a) and (b) A 17-member U.S. Specialised Mining/Mine Plant Processing/Earthmoving and Construction Equipment Trade Mission is currently visiting India, with a view to evaluating the Indian market for U. S. Mining, Construction and earth-moving equipment.

DIFFICULTIES FACED BY ART SILK WEAVING UNITS

1208. SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the art silk weaving units are facing great difficulty; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI V. P. SINGH): (a) There are some market reports of accumulation of stocks due to fall in demand but the Government is not aware of the extent of the accumulation of stocks because production of art silk fabrics is mostly in the decentralised sector.

(b) Does not arise.

MEETING OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA COTTON GROWERS WITH MINISTER

1209. SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that cotton growers from Haryana and Punjab met him recently;

(b) if so, the details of their demands; and

(c) what is the reaction of Government thereto?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI V. P. SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The deputation had voiced their grievance against what they felt were the low prices of cotton and had requested that the Cotton Corporation of India should enter the Cotton market.

(c) While Government recognise the

need for a reasonable return to growers, the interests of consumers and the pressing problem of checking inflationary pressures in the economy cannot be overlooked. Government also note that cotton prices are prevailing well above support levels recommended by the Agricultural Prices Commission and by and large also above prices prevailing during corresponding period in the last year.

INDIAN AIRLINES ROUTES SUFFERING LOSS

1210. SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) which are the routes of Indian Airlines operating at loss;

(b) whether Government have a proposal to stop the operation of these routes; and

(c) if not, the steps being taken to make these routes profitable?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR): (a) Routewise economics of services operated by Indian Airlines so far during 1974-75 have not yet been compiled.

(b) and (c) While the Indian Airlines is expected to function, under the Air Corporations Act, on business principles as far as possible, it has to perform its obligations as a public utility service. Consequently the Corporation is obliged to continue to operate some of the un-economic routes in order to meet regional and tourist requirements.

ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS BY OFFICIALS FROM A SMUGGLER

1211. SHRI SAWAI SINGH SISODIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news report which appeared in the 'Indian Express' of September 30, 1974 to the effect that Shri Sukur Narain Bakhia, the noted smuggler, who was arrested in a private nursing home, distributed costly presents to the hospital staff and some of the officials of the Enforcement Directorate also accepted the presents by Shri Bakhia;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and
(c) what action has been taken by Government in the matter?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI): (a) The Government have seen newspaper reports to this effect. There were also further reports in newspapers on behalf of Sukur Narain Biikhia denying these allegations.

(b) and (c) Enquiries reveal that there is no basis for the reports. Sukur Narain Bakhia was constantly guarded by the State Police after detention under MISA.

अफीम के तस्करों की गिरफ्तारी

1212. श्री वीरेन्द्र कुमार सखलेचा : क्या वित्त मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) आन्तरिक सुरक्षा बनाये रखना अधिनियम के अधीन तस्करों को गिरफ्तार करने के अपने चालू अभियान में क्या उन्होंने अफीम के तस्करों के विरुद्ध भी कार्यवाही की है ;

(ख) आन्तरिक सुरक्षा बनाये रखना अधिनियम के अधीन कितने अफीम के तस्करों को गिरफ्तार किया गया और उन सबके नाम क्या हैं; और

(ग) अफीम के उन तस्करों के नाम क्या हैं जिनकी खोज अभी भी की जा रही है ?

t [ARREST OF OPIUM SMUGGLERS

1212. SHRI V. K. SAKHLECHA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Central Government have also taken action against opium smugglers in the country in its current campaign of arresting smugglers under MISA" ;

(b) the number and names of opium smugglers arrested under MISA; and

(c) the names of those opium smugglers against whom investigation is still being made ?]

English translation.