

to time we request the Egyptian Embassy to send somebody, and we receive the reports of what is happening there.

SHRI DEOKINANDAN NARAYAN: May I know, Sir, whether the Government has taken any steps in regard to the fast that is going on by Shrimati Sudha Joshi and another lady?

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON: Sir, the Government has not only taken notice of that, but the Prime Minister made a statement also in the other House about that.

**238 and *239. [The questioner (Shri C. L. Varma) was absent. For answers, vide cols. 1913-14 infra.]*

AMENDMENT OF THE COMPANIES Act, 1956

***240. SHRI AMOLAKH CHAND:** Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have accepted the amendments suggested by the Committee set up to consider amendment of the Companies Act, 1956; and

(b) if so, when a Bill on the subject is likely to be introduced in Parliament?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATISH CHANDRA): (a) The recommendations of the Committee are under consideration.

(b) It may be possible to introduce an amending Bill in the latter half of the year.

SHRI AMOLAKH CHAND: May I know, Sir, whether the amendments suggested are to plug the loopholes and to modify the clauses found to be too restrictive for the smooth running of the companies?

SHRI SATISH CHANDRA: Sir, some of the modifications recommended by the Committee may make the

compliance easier for the companies, while there are other suggestions which may be slightly restrictive.

SHRI AMOLAKH CHAND: May I know, Sir, the number of prosecutions which have been launched against the companies in the year 1956-57 and up to the 31st of December, 1957, and whether they are on the increase?

SHRI SATISH CHANDRA: Sir, the prosecutions have not been on the increase. I cannot give the exact number just now. But after the passing of the Companies Act we have been following the practice of giving warnings to the companies as the new Act is more complicated. The companies are generally adapting themselves to it.

SHRI AMOLAKH CHAND: May I know, Sir, whether the provisions regarding the conversion of managing agency into a selling agency, restrictions on borrowings and cornering of shares are also causing distress to the shareholders, and if this is also under investigation by the companies and the Government?

SHRI SATISH CHANDRA: Sir, this report has been placed on the Table of the House, and the hon. Member can see from it that many modifications in respect of these matters are proposed to be made when the amending Bill comes before the House.

IMPORT OF PLANT AND MACHINERY FOR THE HEAVY ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT PROJECT, BHOPAL

***241. SHRI AMOLAKH CHAND:** Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether orders for the purchase of plant and machinery for the heavy electrical equipment project at Bhopal have been placed in the United Kingdom;

(b) if so, by what time the plants and machineries are likely to reach India; and