

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM) : (a) Final estimates of production of Pepper for 1994-95 have not yet become due from the States. However, on the basis of available assessment, the likely production of Pepper during 1994-95 may not be lower than the last two years.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The targets for production of Pepper are not fixed on year to year basis.

#### Procurement by FCI

6718. SHRI PHOOL CHAND VERMA : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether huge expenditure incurred on procurement, sale, maintenance and storage of wheat and rice by the Food Corporation of India has resulted in increase in the prices of foodgrains in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the functioning of the Food Corporation of India is likely to be reviewed by the Government in the near future?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH) : (a) and (b). No, Sir. The procurement by Food Corporation of India is done on Minimum Support Price announced by the Central Government. The foodgrains procured by FCI are issued at the Central Issue Price fixed by Government which includes only procurement price (MSP) and procurement incidentals (taxes, levies, labour charges and transportation up to FCI godown). The expenditure on storage shortages interest and freight to consuming areas is borne by the Central Government in the form of food subsidy.

(c) The Government of India constantly reviews the functioning of the Food Corporation of India from time to time.

[Translation]

#### Introduction of Astrology

6719. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY :

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH :

SHRI RAMPAL SINGH :

SHRI BALRAJ PASSI :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to introduce Astrology as a subject in the school and college syllabus keeping in view the fact that principles of astrology are absolutely scientific;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE) (KUMARI SELJA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

[English]

#### Drilling of Oil

6720. DR. R. MALLU : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether his Ministry has ever had an interaction with ONGC on the minimum safeguards to be undertaken while drilling for oil;

(b) if so, the details of such discussion;

(c) the outcome thereof;

(d) whether there was any consensus between your Ministry and the ONGC on ecological issues; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). Environmental protection and safety measures are discussed with ONGC in the meeting of the Expert Committee for each project relating to oil drilling whenever these proposals are submitted for appraisal from the environmental angle. Based on the discussions and the Environmental Impact and Risk Assessment Reports etc., necessary pollution control measures and environmental safeguards are stipulated to ONGC for compliance.

(d) and (e). Normally, there is no disagreement on ecological issues. However, if warranted, site specific studies are also undertaken to examine long term environmental impacts and risk associated with the proposed activities so as to suggest remedial measures to minimise adverse environmental impacts from a particular project.

#### Import of Railway Wagons and Spare Parts

6721. SHRI M.G. REDDY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the total amount of money spent on the import of railway wagons, coaches, spare parts, locomotives etc., during 1991-92; and

(b) the value of orders placed with the public sector manufacturing units in West Bengal during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF) : (a) No imports of railway wagons, coaches and locomotives were made during 1991-92. During this period, an amount of Rs. 425.7 crores including