

to which Government purchase opium from the farmers;

(b) the basis on which that policy was formulated;

(c) whether Government now pay the farmers for their opium produce in proportion to the increase in its production cost;

(d) the time by which Government propose to introduce a new procurement policy of opium with a view to removing the disparity between the cost price and procurement price;

(e) whether Government are aware that with the introduction of slab system, the farmers are being paid less at present;

(f) if so, whether this policy requires to be revised; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor ?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) :**

(a) to (d) In the Annual Departmental Narcotics Meeting held generally in the month of July-August every year, all important matters relating to poppy cultivation in the succeeding crop year, including the question of procurement price for opium payable to the farmers are considered and recommendations made to the Government for consideration.

The production of opium in India is essentially export-oriented. Due to global over-supply of the opiate raw materials, Indian opium has been facing increasing competition from alternate raw materials particularly, concentrate of poppy straw. The question of price payable to the poppy cultivators is examined keeping in view the need for the export price of opium to be competitive, the comparative income of farmers from poppy crop and other cash crops cultivated in the poppy-growing areas, the cost of production, the stock of opium lying with the Government factories, etc. While fixing the price structure of opium, care is taken to ensure that the income from poppy crop accruing to the cultivators is more than the cost of production.

(e) to (g) The slab system of price payable to cultivators has been in vogue

for several years providing high rates as incentives for higher production per hectare. The existing price of opium to cultivators is sufficiently remunerative.

As stated above, the question of price of opium payable to the cultivators for the crop year 1985-86 will be examined at this year's Annual Departmental Narcotics Meeting, keeping all the relevant factors in view.

[English]

**Pending Cases for Payment of Pension, Gratuity etc. In S. B. I. Fatehpur, District Kangra.**

**3718. SHRI E.S.M. PAKEER MOHAMMED :** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of pending cases of payment of pension, gratuity, commuted value of pension and arrears of ad-hoc relief sanctioned by Government from time to time with the State Bank of India, Fatehpur, District Kangra (H.P.);

(b) the reasons for the delay in making payment in the above cases and the action that has been taken in this regard against the concerned bank authorities; and

(c) when these pending cases are likely to be settled and payment is made to pensioners and family pensioners ?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) :**

(a) to (c) State Bank of India has reported that no case for payment of pension, gratuity, etc. is pending in its branch at Fatehpur, District Kangra (H. P.), as on 12-4-1985.

There was, however, some delay in regard to adjustment of arrears in 19 cases, of ad-hoc relief sanctioned by Government, from time to time. These cases have also been settled and the amounts credited to the pensioners accounts.

**Targets for Completion of Reconciliation of Inter Branch Transactions in Nationalised Banks**

**3719. SHRI R. PRABHU :** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :