

(a) the financial assistance given by Central Government to Himachal Pradesh Government for drought and flood relief measures during the last one year;

(b) the criteria followed in giving such grants;

(c) whether Central team visits late to various States to assess the damage caused by droughts, floods etc. with the result that financial assistance generally reaches late to the States; and

(d) whether Government would formulate some policy whereby Central teams could automatically visit the drought and flood affected areas in future to assess the situation ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA) : (a) The Government of India have sanctioned Central assistance for natural calamities to the Government of Himachal Pradesh during the years 1984-85 and 1985-86 as details given below :—

(Rs. in Crores)

Year	Drought	Flood, heavy rains etc.
1984-85	19.37 (including Rs. 6.67 for 1985.86).	2.73
1985-86	16.46	Under processing.

(b) to (d). According to the criteria prescribed by the successive Finance Commissions, the administration of relief to the calamity affected population is the responsibility of the State Governments. For this purpose, a suitable margin money as recommended by the Eighth Finance Commission is available at their disposal to take up immediate relief measures. The margin

money is shared equally by the State/Central Government. If the State Government requires additional funds over and above the State's share of margin money after spending their own share, they approach the Central Government for assistance by submitting a Memorandum of their needs. A Central Team is generally deputed to the State concerned immediately on receipt of the Memorandum. Pending visit/report of the Central Team if the need of the State Government is urgent, the Ways and Means Advance is released to the States concerned to enable them to carry on relief work uninterrupted.

High Level Panel to Check Price Rise

1240. SHRI KAMLA PRASAD SINGH : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of Government has been drawn to the news item "PM sets up two high-level panels to check prices" regarding check on price rise and quality of products appearing in the 'Hindustan Times' dated 11 October, 1985;

(b) the manner in which Government propose to check the quality of goods marketed and elimination of sub-standard items; and

(c) whether there is any proposal to make ISI certification compulsory in respect of all consumer items of daily need ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) For checking the quality of goods being marketed by various manufacturers, the Government has already made ISI Marking compulsory for a number of products. Where products are covered under compulsory Quality Certification Scheme of ISI, punitive

actions are taken against manufacturers of sub-standard items.

(c) Government intends to bring gradually more and more consumer items of mass consumption and goods involving safety of consumers under compulsory ISI Certification Marking Scheme.

Request to Raise Soft Loan Facility for Fertilizer Distribution By Orissa

1241. SHRI JAGANNATH PATNAIK : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Orissa Government have urged the Centre to raise the soft loan facility for fertilizer distribution in order to step up fertilizer consumption substantially in the State;

(b) whether it has also urged that the private dealers should be persuaded to take up distribution of nutrients not only at railheads as at present, but also in interior and inaccessible areas; and

(c) if so, the reaction of Central Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA) : (a) to (c). The Orissa Government has been asking for sanction of additional amount of shortterm loan for purchase and distribution of agricultural inputs, namely, fertilizers, seeds and pesticides so that sufficient capital is provided to the institutional agencies to procure and supply these inputs. They also mentioned that in Orissa private trade have not taken up this work in a big way. However, due to the provision for grant of short terms loan being limited, an amount of Rs. 11.50 crores only could be sanctioned to the State as against its demand for Rs 30 crores during the year oh 1985-86. The State Government has been constantly persuading the private trade to take up dstrubution of fertilizers in the remote areas.

[*Translation*]

Increase in Price of Levy Sugar

1242. SHRI C. B. GAMIT : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that demand has been made to increase the price of levy sugar keeping in view the increasing cost of production of sugarcane and if so, the details thereof;

(b) the extent to which increase in price of levy sugar has been demanded; and

(c) the extent to which the price of levy sugar is proposed to be increased, the time by which it will be increased and the details of the concrete steps being taken by Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir, one of the organisation, ISMA, representing the sugar industry has demanded increase in the price of levy sugar to Rs. 413/- per quintal based on their request for raising the statutory minimum price of sugarcane to Rs 18/- per quintal linked to a basic recovery of 85 per cent for the current season 1985-86.

(c) Government have since fixed the ex-factory prices of levy sugar for 1985-86 season on 14.11.85 taking into account the statutory minimum cane price of Rs. 16.50 per quintal linked to 8.5. per cent recovery. The average all-India ex-factory price of levy sugar has been increased from Rs. 346.75 per quintal in 1984-85 to Rs. 391.00 per quintal for 1985-86. The retail levy sugar price will be increased from Rs. 4.40 to Rs. 4.80 per kg. with effect from 1.12.1985.

[*English*]

Durgapur Unit of H. F. C. Remaining Idle

1243. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :