

interviews that large scale corruption is prevalent in the final settlement of claims, grant of advances and loans in the Accounts Branch of the various Regional Offices in general and Delhi in particular ; and

(b) if so, the remedial steps the Central Commissioner has taken in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR) : The administration of the Employees Provident Fund is the concern of the Central Board of Trustees set up under the Employees' Provident Funds and Family Pension Fund Act, 1952 and not the direct concern of the Central Government. The Provident Fund authorities have intimated as under :

- (a) No.
(b) Does not arise.

Excise Duty on Free Sale Sugar in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu

7037. SHRI LAKSHMINARAYAN : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether consequent on the release of levy sugar from the factories in Maharashtra, the sugar factories in Maharashtra paid Excise Duty @ 37½ per cent on free sale sugar on 30 per cent of their production in the year 1969-70 ;

(b) whether this facility was not given to the factories in Tamil Nadu and they had to pay Excise Duty on more than 30 per cent of their production, contrary to the declared policy of Government to treat only 30 per cent as free sugar and balance as levy sugar ;

(c) the reasons of this discrimination between Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra ; and

(d) whether Government propose to refund the excess Excise duty collected from the factories of Tamil Nadu ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHER SINGH) : (a) to (c). During the year 1969-70 the rate of excise duty on free sale sugar as well as on levy sugar was 23 per cent *ad valorem* prior to 1st March, 1970, but from 1st March, 1970 it was increased to 25 percent *ad valorem* on levy sugar and 37.5 percent on free sale sugar. The percentage of releases of free sale sugar to

production of the year 1969-70 made to sugar factories in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu during the year 1969-70 (1st October, 1969 to 30th September, 1970) was uniform. However, on account of poor lifting of levy sugar quotas allotted from factories in high cost zones (including Tamil Nadu) and consequent accumulation of stocks with them, larger quantities of sugar were released for free sale from factories having larger stocks with a view to reduce disparity in their stock position.

(d) Does not arise.

Mushroom Cultivation

7038. SHRI BHUVARAHAN : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the places where mushroom is cultivated in India under the Department or in private side ;

(b) the total production of mushroom for the last two years ; and

(c) whether there is any proposal to increase the production by using modern methods ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE) : (a) The mushroom is grown in the States of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, U. P. and Union Territory of Delhi.

(b) Rough estimates are as follows :

	1966-70	1970-71
(i) Guchhi	21,000 kg.	13,200 Kg.
(ii) white mushroom	Not available	25,000 Kg.

Type

Precise information is not available.

(c) Yes, Sir. The techniques of increasing production developed by the Mushroom Research Institute, Solan are being extended to other mushroom growing areas.

Non-Production of Employees Provident Fund Records by M.s. Royal Timber Corporation Jharia, Dhanbad

7039. SHRI R. P. YADAV : Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether prosecution was launched