

(c) The handling charges, including inland transportation, as projected in Budget Estimates are given below :

Year	Handling Charges (Rs. PMT)
1995-96	1090
1996-97	1190
1997-98	1170

#### Deteriorating Law and Order in Assam

313. SHRI NRIPEN GOSWAMI : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether law and order in Assam is deteriorating continuously;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government propose to maintain a register of persons involved in anti-social elements and destructive activities in the State; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) and (b) Law and order situation in Assam remains vitiated due to violent activities of the insurgent groups.

(c) and (d) Law and order is a State-subject. The maintenance of register of those involved in anti-social and destructive activities is the responsibility of the State Police. The Central Government have no proposal to maintain any such register.

[Translation]

#### Import of Essential Commodities

314. SHRI C.D. GAMIT : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity and countries from which vegetables, pulses, edible oils, spices and fruits have been imported for the National Capital Territory of Delhi;

(b) the foreign exchange incurred thereon and the rates at which these commodities being sold in Delhi and other cities; and

(c) the procedure adopted by the Government to sell these commodities ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH YADAV) : (a) There was no import of vegeta-

bles, pulses, edible oils, spices and fruits exclusively for the National Capital Territory of Delhi. However, a quantity of 687 MTs of onions were imported through the NAFED from Dubai and Kyrgyzstan on Government account for distribution in Delhi.

(b) and (c) As per information furnished by NAFED, the total foreign exchange involved for import of 687 MTs of onions was equivalent to Rs. 1.61 crores. The imported onions were distributed through the public distribution agencies at Delhi at a subsidised rate of Rs. 10.00 per kg as per the decision of the Central Government.

[English]

#### Pilferage of Ayurvedic Products and Services

315. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Western Thieves Make a Killing on Ayurveda" appearing in the Pioneer dated October 22, 1998;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) the action taken by the Government in this regard;

(d) whether India is losing billion of dollars of foreign exchange due to foreign countries extracting and exploiting our herbs; and

(e) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to safeguard the interest of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI) : (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. It has been brought to the notice of the Government by the Commonwealth Secretaries U.K. that there is a vast and growing market for herbal medicines in E.C. countries and the west in General. According to a report prepared by Ms Mc Alpine, Thope and Warriar Ltd., for the Commonwealth Secretariat, the market is approximately of 9 billion currently. There is an increasing demand from consumers for Ayurvedic philosophy and products but there is a strict ban in every EC country on selling the Ayurvedic products as medicinal items making claims for their effectiveness. The EC laws make it almost impossible to market Ayurvedic medicines in Europe other than as a food supplement which cannot be advertised as being effective for particular ailments even on the labels of the products concerned. Genuine Ayurvedic drugs can be marketed if the stringent