

ties at Fair Prices due to corruption in Public Distribution System and because of which lower income group are in acute distress;

(b) if so, whether the Government have constituted an enquiry team for improvement in this system; and

(c) if not, the steps taken by the Government for improvement in the system and providing commodities at fair prices to the poor people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) to (c). The Central Government procures, stores and transports key essential commodities and makes them available to the State Governments and U.T. Administrations for further distribution under Public Distribution System (PDS). The internal distribution including decisions regarding scale of entitlement, and retail prices, periodicity of availability at the Fair Price shops, monitoring the supply and availability at the FPS level, supervision and checks on proper distribution is the responsibility of the State Governments/U.T. Administrations. In an operation of such a magnitude, where millions of tonnes of PDS commodities are distributed through a vast network of Fair Price Shops, the possibility of occasional dislocation in the supply and availability cannot altogether be ruled out. However, the PDS has a vital role in providing basic essential commodities to the people at large at reasonable prices, especially subsidised foodgrains. Officers of the State Governments undertake checks and surprise visits to the Fair Price Shops. The State Governments and U.T. Administrations have also been requested to set up Vigilance Committees at FPS level/village level by involving Women Organisations, Voluntary and Consumer Organisations, elected representatives of the people, so that unfair trade prac-

tices indulged in by some traders are checked. Vigilance Committees are reported to have been set up by many State Governments and U.T. Administrations.

Report of Hathi Commission on Price of Life Saving Drugs

404. SHRI NARAIN SINGH CHAUDHRI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a recommendation was made in the Hathi Commission Report to reduce the price of life saving drugs;

(b) if so, the extent to which the recommendation has actually been implemented; and

(c) the reasons for not implementing the recommendation in full?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (DR. CHINTA MOHAN): (a) to (c). In its report on pricing of drugs and pharmaceuticals, the Committee on Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Industry, Popularly known as Hathi Committee, had recommended that more selectivity in the system of price regulation with a view to ensuring fair prices in respect of drugs and pharmaceuticals would be desirable rather than on all drugs and pharmaceuticals irrespective of their importance. This has been the guiding principle behind the promulgation of DPCO, 1979 and 1987.

[English]

Meeting of Indian Science Congress on Population Problem

405. SHRI SHRAVAN KUMAR PATEL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Science Con-