

(c) whether it has adversely affected the books, newspapers etc; and

(d) the remedial steps being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY) (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. Average price of Writing and Printing Paper has increased from approximately Rs. 19,500 per MT to Rs. 26,000 per MT, in the last one year. Prices have increased on account of rise in cost of coal, power, caustic soda, imported pulp and other inputs.

(c) and (d). There is no statutory control over the price of paper or of the paper based products. Government is alive to the problems arising from the increase in price of paper for book publishing industry and newspaper industry. The Government has recently announced the Newsprint Policy whereby import of Newsprint has been de-controlled and provision is also proposed to be made for meeting the newsprint requirements of small and medium newspapers indigenously. As regards book publishing industry, the customs duty on the import of paper has been reduced from 65% to 40% in the current year's Budget which would make the imported paper cheaper. Paper has also been brought under OGL in the current EXIM Policy, which would enable unrestricted import of paper.

Several rounds of discussions have been held with the Associations of Indigenous Paper Manufacturers and the need to contain prices has been impressed upon them.

Production Cost of Cement

*412. SHRI SURENDRA PAL PATHAK : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the average production cost of per tonne cement in the Public and Private Sector cement plants in the country;

(b) whether the capacity of public sector cement plants is not being fully utilised at present;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(d) the amount of subsidy being given to public and private sector cement plants separately?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY) (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI) : (a) The cost of production per tonne of cement differs from plant to plant, depending upon the size of the plant, technology used, distance of the plant from the sources of raw material etc. Government have not conducted any study to determine the average production cost of cement in the country.

(b) and (c). In 1994-95 the average capacity utilisation of the cement plants owned by the Cement Corporation of India (a Government of India Public Sector Undertaking) was 52% and those of other Public Sector units, 44%. The main reasons for low capacity-utilisation are - old machinery and obsolete technology used by most of these plants, absence of facilities for captive power generation to face power cuts, paucity of working capital etc.

(d) While cement is being provided necessary infrastructural support like allocation of coal and railway wagons for movement of coal and cement etc., no specific subsidy is being given to Public and Private Sector cement plants.

[English]

Supply of C.G.H.S. Medicines

*413. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received several complaints on the quality of medicines supplied through CGHS dispensaries;

(b) the criteria followed by CGHS for procuring these medicines;

(c) whether the Government have any proposal under consideration to procure quality medicines from reputed companies; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR) : (a) Some complaints have been received.

(b) The Medical Stores Depot of CGHS procures formulary medicines from the Medical Stores Organisation of CGHS after placing total annual indents for use in the CGHS dispensaries. Medicines not supplied by M.S.O. and some other medicines required by patients in emergency are also purchased direct from the local registered/authorised Chemists.

(c) and (d). The formulary medicines procured from the M.S.O., (DGHS) are pre-tested and of assured quality from the firms registered with M.S.O. as per established Government procedure. Medicines supplied by the local Chemists are generally of reputed companies and brand names as prescribed by Doctors/Specialists etc. Hence, there is no other proposal to procure medicines.

Clinical Research

*414. SHRI DHARMANNA MONDAYYA SADUL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have constituted an Expert Committee recently to lay down guidelines for clinical research on drugs and vaccine to make them at par with international standards;