

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which this decision is likely to be taken; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH) (a) to (c) The stock holding limits of khandsari dealers have been enhanced from 500 to 1000 quintals and the turnover period of stock has also been enhanced from fifteen to thirty days on 14.2.1996.

[English]

Food Corporation of India

1510. SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Food Corporation of India have diverted railway wagons meant for the movement of foodgrains for the Public Distribution System for carrying the rice for the exporters, resulting into a serious breakdown in the supplies to the Fair Price Shops in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Food Corporation of India has been carrying rice from its godowns to the place of exporter's choice while as per the policy of the Government, the rice has to be sold on as 'as is where is' basis;

(d) whether the Food Corporation of India has to recover a lot of money from the exporter as it has been underpricing the rice at the port towns;

(e) if so, the money is due to the Food Corporation of India from the exporters and since when; and

(f) whether the FCI godowns are being used by exporters for stocking their rice and as a result the foodgrains for the Public Distribution System cannot be stocked in them?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH) (a) and (b) No, Sir. No wagon meant for PDS has been diverted to exporters.

(c) FCI has undertaken rail movement to deliver the stocks to the exporters at mutually agreed places basically to help in the quick liquidation of stocks.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) The question does not arise.

(f) No, Sir. The exporters have to lift the stock within the stipulated time fixed by FCI and in case if they fail to lift the stocks within the stipulated time, FCI is charging storage charges from the defaulters.

Export of Sugar

1511. SHRI AMAR PAL SINGH: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to allow

the export of free-sale sugar during 1995-96;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) its likely impact on the price of sugar in the country?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH) : (a) to (c) In view of the surplus availability of sugar, Government has so far notified a quantity of 6.50 lakh tonnes of sugar out of freesale portion for commercial exports, through M/s. Indian Sugar & General Industry Export Import Corporation Ltd., a notified export agency under the provisions of Sugar Export Promotion Act, 1958. Since export of sugar is being undertaken out of surplus sugar available in the country, it is not likely to have any appreciable impact on price of sugar in the country. Further, sugar prices in the open market are regulated through the mechanism of monthly releases of sugar.

Airport in Lakshadweep

1512. SHRI TARA SINGH:

SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has studied the rationale behind the proposed airport construction in Lakshadweep by felling of more than one lakh trees and its impact on the forests and environment before granting clearance to the project;

(b) if so, the stage at which the matter stands at present; and

(c) the extent to which his Ministry have considered the impact of the project on the local environment and ecology?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT) : (a) to (c) Project proposal was received in December, 1995 for construction of an airport at Androth in Lakshadweep group of islands for which no environmental or forestry clearance has been given. The project proposal was discussed with the concerned authorities who had informed that the proposal would be revised and resubmitted. The revised proposal has not been received so far. Before according clearance to any project, the impact of the project on local environment and ecology is always taken into account.

Renovation of Building and Nursing Home

1513. SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount spent on the renovation and modernisation of Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, New Delhi during the last three years on building and Nursing Home separately as on March 1, 1996;