

- (ii) In respect of coking coal the prices are based on ash percentage.
- (iii) In respect of semi-coking coal, the prices are based on combined percentage of ash and moisture.

The prices of superior quality coal i.e. all coking coals and non-coking coal of grades A, B and C have been deregulated with effect from 1.4.1996 except in WCL and SCCL where deregulated prices became effective from 22.3.1996 and 19.4.1996 respectively. The prices of grades D to G of non-coking coals, which are mostly used in the power sector, still continue to be administered.

[English]

#### Coir-Geo-Textiles

4374. SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Coir Board has requested to the Government to conduct a Seminar on promotion of export by Coir and Coir Products abroad;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to popularise Coir Geo-Textiles for Soil Engineering purposes?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (c). A proposal has been received by the Government from the Coir Board seeking Government approval for conducting a seminar on coir gec-textiles. Government have already accorded its in principle approval for the proposal. Coir Board has been entrusted with the task of popularising use of coir products including coir geo-textiles for soil engineering in foreign countries.

#### Opium Cultivation

4375. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a report appearing in the 'Times of India', dated November 27, 1996 under the caption "Policy change may be a shot in arm for illegal opium trade";

(b) if so, the details in this regard and the reasons for the change relating to opium cultivation regulations;

(c) the present quantum of legal cultivation of opium and the number of licensed opium cultivators in the country, State-wise and the details of productivity norms set by Government in this regard; and

(d) the steps taken to check the opium cultivators illegal diversion of their produce to the drugs markets in the country and abroad?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A statement explaining the position is enclosed.

(c) At present, licit cultivation of poppy is allowed only in the States of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan in the country. The area licenced, the number of cultivators who have been given licences to cultivate poppy and the productivity norms set by the Government in each State is as under :

| State          | Area licensed (hectare) | No of cultivators | Minimum qualifying yield (Productivity Norms) |
|----------------|-------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Madhya Pradesh | 16552.90                | 42626             | 48 Kgs /hectare                               |
| Rajasthan      | 12497.90                | 31465             | 48 Kgs /hectare                               |
| Uttar Pradesh  | 708.60                  | 940               | 40 Kgs /hectare                               |

(d) The system of control over poppy cultivation is quite elaborate which includes, inter-alia, 100% measurement of poppy fields, test measurement by senior officials, constant monitoring of crop conditions and daily weighment of produce of each cultivator during the period of opium cultivation. The enforcement set up of the Central Bureau of Narcotics has also been strengthened by improving transport and communication net work and setting up more preventive intelligence cells in and around poppy growing areas. Enforcement operations and general vigil are intensified during the lancing period and collection of opium. In addition to departmental officers, other enforcement agencies and para-military forces are also engaged for the above purpose.

#### STATEMENT

The newspaper reports appearing in the 'Times of India' and some other dailies about opium licensing policy of the Govt. have published incorrect and misleading facts based on wrong presumptions.

The opium policy for the year 1996-97 was based, as in previous years, on an assessment of the annual requirement of opium and the area required to be licensed to produce the same. With the depletion in the opium stock position the area under poppy cultivation was raised, in the year 1994-95 from about 13,000 hectares to 25,000 hectares. The International Narcotics Control Board, which is the concerned United Nations body, has been writing to the Govt. of India emphasizing its responsibilities as the sole supplier of licit opium and the need to build up stocks to provide for future eventualities like crop damage etc. During the current year, the area under cultivation has been increased to about 29,760 hectares and not 40,000 hectares as reported in the Newspapers.

Like in previous years, this year also the Minimum qualifying yield has been raised from 46 kgs. to 48 kgs. per hectare (for Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan) to prevent any leakage of opium. For Uttar Pradesh, the Minimum Qualifying Yield has been fixed at 40 kgs. as that State is in a different agro-climatic area and has a traditionally lower yield.

To provide for the shortfall in area and the number of cultivators delicensed every year, the experiment of inducting new cultivators or increasing the size of individual cultivator's area was tried in the previous years but the same had by and large failed. While the productivity fell with the increase in the area, the induction of fresh cultivators every year introduced a hiccup in the policy which encouraged corruption and leakage of opium into illicit channel. No long term relationship or trust could be built in such a state and new set of people were being introduced to opium trade habits every year. The Govt. has, therefore, decided to retain, as far as may be, the previous year's cultivators provided they were not involved in any manner under the N.D.P.S. Act, 1985 and the Rules made thereunder, as laid down specifically under Clause 3 of the current year's Policy. Almost 75% of the cultivators licensed this year had fulfilled the prescribed Minimum qualifying yield of 48 Kgs. or 40 kgs., as the case may be, in the previous year of cultivation. Out of a total of about 75,000 cultivators licensed this year, the concession in terms of yield has been extended to about 19,000 and not 70,000 cultivators as reported in the Newspapers. The said concession is subject to the proviso that the concerned cultivators shall be permanently delicensed if they fail to tender the prescribed Minimum Qualifying Yield in the year 1996-97. There is no evidence that such cultivators had diverted their products to drug trade. Opium poppy being a delicate crop susceptible to damage, delicensing of a large number of cultivators every year, who fail to reach the prescribed Minimum Qualifying Yield, is quite common. Relief in terms of yield was being granted to such cultivators in the past also.

The said concession was extended in view of the pressing need of the Government to have a continuity in the system and license a certain minimum number of cultivators to produce the targetted quantity of opium. It is in the long term interest of the country and directed to prevent the prevalent drug abuse.

The presumption that the entire opium produce on about 29,760 hectares this year would be diverted into illicit channels notwithstanding the strong enforcement machinery of the Department, is completely baseless besides being irrational. Similarly, to calculate the likely produce and leakage of opium into illicit channels and quantify its price in the black market is a hypothetical exercise which does not merit serious consideration.

[Translation]

### Development of Textile Industry

4376. PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have received any proposal from the Government of Rajasthan in regard to allocation of more funds and providing more facilities for the promotion and development of handloom, powerloom, readymade garments and woollen garments industries in the State as well as to resolve the problems being faced by these industries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken so far or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA) : (a) to (c). Union Govt. have not received any proposal from the Govt. of Rajasthan in regard to allocation of more funds and providing more facilities for the promotion and development of powerloom, readymade garments, woollen garments industries in the State as well as to resolve the problems being faced by these industries.

As regards 'handloom', no such proposal with regard to allocation of more funds has been received from State Govt. of Rajasthan for providing more facilities for promotion and development of handloom. However, funds to the tune of Rs. 5.84 lakhs under the Scheme of setting up of Enforcement Machinery and Rs. 12.67 lakhs under the scheme of MDA to States have been released during the current financial year 1996-97 (as on 3.12.96) to Govt. of Rajasthan. Releases made during last three years to the State Government of Rajasthan under various on-going Handloom Development Schemes are indicated below :

(Value Rs. in Lakhs)

| S.No                   | Scheme                         | 1993-94 | 1994-95 | 1995-96 |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| <b>Plan Scheme</b>     |                                |         |         |         |
| 1                      | Publicity and Exhibition       |         | 2.25    | -       |
| 2                      | Margin Money for Dist. Weavers |         | 50      | -       |
| 3                      | Workshed cum Housing Scheme    | 40.16   | 6.00    | 7.40    |
| 4                      | PPS/IHVDS                      | 12.25   | 34.57   | 336.94  |
| 5                      | HDC/QDU                        | -       | 3.04    | 7.73    |
| 6                      | Health Package Scheme          | 20.00   | -       | 25.50   |
| 7                      | Thrift Fund Scheme             | 1.65    | 1.00    | 1.00    |
| 8                      | Setting up of Enf. Machinery   | 5.00    | 7.51    | 2.67    |
| Sub Total              |                                | 79.06   | 54.87   | 381.24  |
| <b>Non-Plan Scheme</b> |                                |         |         |         |
| 1.                     | MDA for states                 | 130.11  | 68.59   | 33.07   |
| 2.                     | Janta Cloth Scheme             | 291.39  | 123.05  | 113.03  |
| Sub Total              |                                | 421.50  | 191.64  | 146.10  |
| Total                  |                                | 500.56  | 246.51  | 527.34  |