

(c) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken to remove this shortage of sugar in the market and bring down the prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE): (a) No, Sir. The decontrol has been in respect of 40 per cent of the sugar production.

(b) and (c). The prices of sugar in the free market have declined to some extent with the increase in arrivals. They are expected to get stabilised with the arrival of further stocks and future releases of sugar for free sale.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF WAGE BOARD ON IRON ORE INDUSTRY IN GOA

3959. SHRI YASHPAL SINGH: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the iron ore industry in Goa have requested for the exemption from the obligation to implement the recommendations of the Wage Board; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI HATHI):

(a) A representation was received from the Goa Mineral Ore Exporters' Association requesting that implementation of the recommendations of the Wage Board might be held in abeyance.

(b) The request made by the Association has not been acceded to. The Association has been requested to advise its members to implement the Wage Board's recommendations.

FOOD IMPORTS UNDER PL 480

3960. SHRI YASHPAL SINGH: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether supply of three million tons of foodgrains to India under PL 480 during 1968 is dependent on the fulfilment of certain conditions;

(b) if so, what are those conditions, and

(c) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE): (a) to (c). The negotiations for getting supplies of foodgrains during 1968 from the U.S.A. under PL-480 are still in progress. The quantity which is expected to be made available under the next agreement is 3.5 million tonnes for the first six months of the year. The conditions which will be incorporated in the next agreement have not yet been finalised.

WATERMEN IN THE ANDAMAN FOREST DEPARTMENT

3961. SHRI K. R. GANESH: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether non-gazetted staff of the Andaman Forest Department is given indent for watermen;

(b) if so, the charges for the same and the market rates for watermen;

(c) whether this concession is given to the industrial staff also; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE): (a) to (d). The information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the Sabha in due course.

REPAIR OF L.C.T. AND FOREST CRAFTS IN ANDAMAN

3962. SHRI K. R. GANESH: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the cost of repairs of the L.C.T. and other Forest Crafts of the Andaman Forest Department separately for the years from 1962 to 1967; and

(b) the reasons for the increase in their repairs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE): (a) and (b). The information

is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the Sabha in due course.

PAYMENT OF TERMINAL GRATUITY BY FOREST DEPARTMENT OF ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS

3963. SHRI K. R. GANESH : Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Andaman Forest Department has stopped payment of Terminal gratuity to the industrial staff;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government's approval was taken to discontinue this concession ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) : (a) to (c). The information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the Sabha in due course.

SCALES OF PAY OF MAHAUTS AND FOREST GUARDS OF ANDAMAN FOREST DEPARTMENT

3964. SHRI AMRIT NAHATA : Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received any representation to give appropriate scale of pay to the mahauts and Forest Guards of the Andaman Forest Department; and

(b) if so, whether Government have formulated any proposals in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) : (a) and (b). The information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the Sabha in due course.

NORTH ANDAMAN FOREST

3965. SHRI AMRIT NAHATA : Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the total area of North Andaman Forest under Messrs. P. C. Ray & Co. (P) Ltd.;

(b) the total estimated tonnage of timber in this area;

(c) the estimated price of this timber; and

(d) the loss to the national exchequer as a result of litigation with the above firm ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) : (a) to (d). The information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the Sabha in due course.

12.13 Hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

REPORTED AMERICAN INTERFERENCE WITH THE LAST GENERAL ELECTIONS IN INDIA

SHRI H. N. MUKERJEE (Calcutta North East) : I call the attention of the Minister of Home Affairs to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon :

"Reported American interference with the last general elections in India."

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would invite the attention of the House to the statement I had made on June 15, 1967 regarding the use of foreign funds in the General Elections. I had at that time informed the House that a report in the matter had been received from the Intelligence Bureau and was being examined carefully. It would be recalled that on December 7, 1967, the question had again come up in the course of supplementaries in response to the statement made by me regarding the reported Russian interference with the last General Elections in India. I had again informed the House that the entire question of the use of foreign money in the last General Elections was being examined by the Government on the basis of a report submitted by the I.B. It is not possible at this stage to indicate the time that would be taken in completing the examination, but I would like to assure the House that it would be done as expeditiously as possible.

SHRI H. N. MUKERJEE : It is really disconcerting that Government pursues a