

prices of copper and nickel in May, 1985 and June, 1985 due to appreciation of Pound Sterling *vis-a-vis* Indian Rupee. However, in July, 1985 and August, 1985 prices were reduced in most of the categories.

**Assistance to Growers of Cardamom of Kerala**

2954. SHRI P. A. ANTONY : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to give assistance to the growers of cash crop cardamom who have lost their crops in the recent floods and landslides in Kerala; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. A. SANGMA) : (a) and (b). On receipt of a memorandum from the Government of Kerala seeking Central Assistance for floods affected areas a Central Study Team visited the flood affected areas (including cardamom) for making an on-the-spot study. The report of the Team has been received, which is under examination in the Ministry of Agriculture. It is not possible to indicate the details of recommended sanction at this stage.

**Loans to Group Housing Societies by Public Sector Banks**

2955. SHRI P. A. ANTONY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to allow public sector banks to give loans to group housing societies; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) and (b). In terms of the guidelines issued by Reserve Bank of India, Cooperative Societies are eligible for housing finance within the quantum earmarked for the banking sector. According to the existing guidelines issued by the Reserve Bank of India on housing finance, scheduled commercial banks are expected to grant loans to the extent of 0.5% of the total advances as on a particular date of the previous year for house construction activities. The present amount

earmarked for the housing finance for one year is Rs. 150 crores, out of which the banks are required to sanction an amount of Rs. 65 crores by way of direct finance to eligible borrowers at the specified rates. Co-operative Group Housing Societies are covered under the eligible category of borrowers under housing finance.

**Handloom Cloth Worth Rs. 5 crores lying unsold in Kerala**

2956. SHRI V. S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN : Will the Minister of SUPPLY AND TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Rs. 5 crores worth of handloom cloth are lying unsold in Kerala;

(b) whether this has created a crisis situation in the handloom sector in the State; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken to remedy the situation ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SUPPLY AND TEXTILES (SHRI CHANDRASHEKHAR SINGH) : (a) and (b). As reported by the State Government of Kerala, there is a stock of handloom cloth worth Rs. 20 crores with Kerala Handloom Weavers' Cooperative Societies, Kerala Handloom Weavers Apex Primary Society and Kerala State Handloom Development Corporation. This stock is procured and kept for sale during special rebate periods allowed by the State Government.

(c) The State Government has taken a number of steps to clear the accumulated stock of handloom cloth by enhancing the number of days of special rebates to 101 days per year during the last 3 years, allot credit sales to Government employees and other public institutions. They have also promoted the sales for handloom through mobile vans the interior places of Kerala and at exhibitions/sales stalls organised in the District. Centres/Taluk Headquarters and other places throughout the State. The State Government has also opened some more handloom retail outlets in the State.

**Meeting of Chief Ministers of States on Overdrafts**

2957. SHRI P. NAMGYAL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :