

(c) whether a demand for fixing a floor price for cardamom has been made by the growers; and

(d) if so, the details of the demand and the steps being taken to meet this demand ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI ARJUN SINGH) : (a) to (d). Repre-

sentations have been received regarding decline in price of cardamom and consequent need for fixing minimum support price. However, the production and monthly average auction prices prevalent over the past few years are given below :—

(Rs. per kg.)

Month	80-81	81-82	82-83	83-84	84-85
August	93.41	89.70	146.79	264.86	221.00
September	101.19	109.93	142.67	258.82	233.85
October	102.31	118.78	142.98	310.64	258.59
November	108.60	115.65	162.64	415.85	222.14
December	100.16	108.95	183.88	452.76	206.17
<b>Production in tonnes</b>					
	4400	4100	2900	1600	3900

It may be seen that prices in 1983-84 and 1984-85 remained abnormally high because of reduced production in the previous years on account of drought. With the return of normalacy in production during 1984-85 prices have also fallen in 1985-86 to the normal level prevalent before the drought period.

Chairman, Cardamom Board, has been directed to get a study of the economics of Cardamom cultivation by small growers carried out. Schemes to increase productivity and reduce cost of cultivation are being simultaneously implemented.

**Opening of Branches of Nationalised Banks in Bihar During Seventh Plan**

1762. SHRIMATI PRABHAWATI GUPTA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to open new branches of nationalised banks in Bihar during the Seventh Five Year Plan; and

(b) if so, the names of such banks in rural and urban areas ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) and (b). The State Governments, including the Government of Bihar, have been asked to identify suitable centres for opening bank branches under the Branch Licensing Policy for the period 1985-90 (co-terminus with the Seventh Five Year Plan). Opening of new branches of public sector banks in Bihar would be considered by the Reserve Bank of India on receipt of the list of identified centres from the State Government.

**India's Export image in respect of Non-Traditional items not satisfactory**

1763. SHRI JAGANNATH PATTAIAK : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that India's export image has not been satisfactory in respect of non-traditional items largely due to factors like inferior quality, unsatisfactory service and poor promotional attributes;

(b) whether the prices of India are lower than those offered by some other countries;