

(c) whether it is proposed to give interest free loan and other assistance required by consumer cooperative societies for the efficient functioning and betterment of staff since the consumer cooperative societies are considered as the only via media for controlling price?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR GOYAL): (a) Consumers Cooperative Societies secure loans from Cooperative/Commercial banks at varying interest rates of 12½ per cent to 18 per cent against pledge/hypothecation of goods.

(b) The Reserve Bank of India in the Agricultural Credit Deptt. has recently considered the high rates of interest charged by Cooperative Bank which are the main source of finance to consumers cooperatives, and advised the cooperative banks through the Registrars of Cooperative Societies, to provide credit/overdraft facilities to consumers Cooperatives for working capital purposes under the Central Government Guarantee scheme at a rate not exceeding 12.5 per cent per annum.

(c) For expansion of business and strengthening of consumer Cooperatives the Central and State Governments provide financial assistance in various forms such as, equity participation in the Share Capital, loan-cum-subsidy for furniture and fixtures and also managerial subsidy according to a prescribed pattern. The loans carry low rates of interest.

Consumer Cooperative Societies functioning in the Country

3229. SHRI SHANKERSINHJI VAGHELA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of consumer cooperative societies functioning in the country;

(b) whether the consumer cooperative societies can play a good role

in stabilizing prices and effective distribution of items including essential commodities; and

(c) if so, whether there is any proposal to bring all the consumer cooperative societies under one management's control?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR GOYAL): (a) For the cooperative year ending 30th June, 1976, the institutional framework of consumer cooperatives comprised of about 450 central consumer cooperatives with over 3,500 branches (including 180 departmental stores), 15,000 primary consumer cooperatives, 14 State level Consumer Cooperative Federations and the National Cooperative Consumers Federation. Altogether the consumer cooperatives provide a network of about 19,000 retail outlets of various sizes.

(b) Consumer cooperatives are expected to play an important role in the distribution of essential commodities and thus help in measures of price stabilization.

(c) There is no such proposal. Consumer cooperatives are to operate within the framework of Cooperative Societies Act and Rules of the States concerned, except the National Cooperative Consumers Federation which has a country-wide jurisdiction. However, guide-lines for operation and management of consumer cooperative institutions are recommended by the Government of India to the State Governments from time to time.

Implementation of the Recommendations of Working Group of the Administrative Reforms Commission on Corporation

3230. CHAUDHURY BRAHM PAKASH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) the action taken so far to implement the recommendations of the