

(d) Whether Government propose to fix up prices of essential commodities all over the country and arrange for the distribution of the same through public distribution system?

**THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE):** (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The functioning of the Public Distribution System is under periodical review in consultation with the State Governments, the Central Ministries, and other public agencies concerned. Efforts are being made to enlarge the scope of the public distribution system in terms of area, population and commodities covered.

(d) In respect of a few selected essential commodities distributed through the Public Distribution System, the central issue price at which these are supplied to the State Governments/their nominees/agenices, are fixed.

**Suspension of Scheme for Sale of Gold Through Auction by RBI**

**232. SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA:** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal under consideration to suspend the scheme for sale of gold through auction by the Reserve Bank of India; and

(b) if so, the details and reasons therefor?

**THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN):** (a) and (b). Pur-

suant to the announcement made by the Finance Minister in his Budget Speech on 28-2-1978 a total quantity of 12.9 tonnes of gold was sold by the Reserve Bank of India in 14 auctions held between May—October, 1978 on behalf of the Government. The total value of sale proceeds was Rs. 86.5 crores.

Consequent to a sudden steep rise in the international price of gold towards the end of September, 1978, sharper increase in the internal price of gold due to speculative forces, the then Government suspended the gold auction on 26-10-1978. Sale of Gold through auction has thus already been suspended.

**Value and Export of Onions**

**233. SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU:** Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) quantity and value of export of onions (year-wise) during the last two years; and

(b) quantity and value of export of onions during the months of October, November and December in 1978 and 1979?

**THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE):** (a) The quantity and value of onions exported were as follows:

Year	Quantity (tonnes)	Value (Rs. lakhs)
1978-79	1,00,488	5
1979-80 (upto Dec.)	70,206	943.80

(b) The quantity and value of onions were as follows:—

Months	1978		1979	
	Qty.	Value	Qty.	Value
October	4212	65.82	2821	48.21
November	3446	62.68	2138	55.50
December	11058	133.76	558	11.98

**Shortage of Sugar and Kerosene in Orissa**

fair price shops has been fixed at Rs. 2.85 a Kg. all over the country.

234. SHRI CHINTAMANI PANI-GRAHI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

As regards kerosene, the allocation and sales for Orissa are given as under:—

Month	(in metric tonnes)	
	Allocation	Sales
November, 79	6,585	5,620
December, 79	5,371	5,324
January, 80	5,667	2,696 (1-15 Jan, 1980) (Provisional)

(a) whether Government are aware of the acute shortage of kerosene and sugar in Orissa and kerosene selling at Rs. 4 to 5 per litre causing great hardship to poor people;

There have been further steep increases in the prices of imported crude oil and finished products since October, 1979. In view of the steep increases in the prices of imported crude and products it is not possible to reduce the prices of refined petroleum products including kerosene at the stage.

(b) if so, what quantity has been supplied to Orissa in November and December, 1979 and for January, 1980; and

(c) what urgent steps Government propose to take to make kerosene and sugar available at reduced prices to consumers?

**Note submitted by FICI on "Minimum Programme of Economic Action"**

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The State Government has reported shortage of sugar and kerosene in Orissa.

235. DR. VASANT KUMAR PANDIT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(b) and (c). As regards levy sugar for distribution through fair price shops, Orissa State's quota was 3,953 tonnes for December, 1979 (17-12-79 to 31-12-79) and 10,723 tonnes for January, 1980. According to Department of Food, about 3,200 tonnes of sugar had been despatched from Maharashtra factories upto 20-1-1980. The movement of the remaining quantity is in progress. Under the dual price policy re-introduced with effect from December 17, 1979, the retail price of sugar supplied through

(a) whether the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) has submitted to Government a note on "minimum programme of economic action";

(b) if so, what are the salient points for policy decision by the new Government; and

(c) decisions, if any, taken on each of the above points?