

STATEMENT III

Prices of Vanaspati and imported edible oils.

	1979 Retail Prices during April-May, 1979	1980 Retail Prices during April-May, 1980
1. Vanaspati	Rs. 167/- for a tin of 15.5 Kgs.	Rs. 189/- and 192/- for a tin of 15.5 Kgs.
2. Imported edible oils		
(i) RBD Palm oil and Palmolein	Rs. 8.25 per Kg.	Rs. 8.25 per Kg.
(Introduced in the public Distribution system in the last week of June, 1979)		
(ii) Refined Rapeseed oil	Rs. 8.50 per Kg.	Rs. 8.50 per Kg.

Memorandum submitted by National Federation of Blind

845. SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of SOCIAL WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have examined the demands made by the National Federation of the Blind in their memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister a few months back;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what steps are being taken in the matter by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The relevant extract from the Memorandum submitted by National Federation of Blind is attached.

(c) Government is examining all the issues raised with a view to determining how best the interests of the blind can be served and their welfare provided for.

Extract Regarding Memorandum submitted by National Federation of Blind.

1. Declare the blind a backward class and grant to them the same

rights and privileges as the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

2. Reserve jobs for the blind in all categories and in all sectors of the economy and give these reservations constitutional sanction.

3. Ensure the strict and speedy action for getting implemented these constitutional reservations.

4. Invest substantial sums in technological research aimed at developing new avenues of employment for the blind.

5. Make education compulsory for the blind and give their educational institutions some financial assistance as is admissible to ordinary educational institutions especially those meant for the children belonging to the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

6. Documentary films exhibiting the potentials and capabilities of the blind in different walks of life be arranged by the Government to educate the public in general immediately.

7. To make arrangements for the registration of the blind in the whole country to assess the educational, economic and social status of the total population of the blind.

8. A uniform syllabus for the studies be provided for all the schools for the blind in the country on the analogy of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan to overcome the problem created by the scarcity of Braille Books.

9. All the Schools|Institutions|Centres/Sheltered workshops being run by the private managements be taken over immediately by the Government because we strongly feel that these private managements are responsible upto certain extent for this present miserable condition of the blind in the country.

10. Blind living in rural areas be given education or training, as the case may be, in his village so that they may earn his livelihood there itself.

11. The jobs of blind workers presently working in different factories be confirmed immediately by a separate statute.

Ex-officio Chairman of Port Blair Municipal Board, A & N Island

846. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Deputy Commissioner, Andamans is the *Ex-Officio* Chairman of Port Blair Municipal Board and whether throughout the country the same system prevails or it is only for the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands Municipal Regulation provided the said provision of *Ex-Officio* Chairman of civil body;

(b) whether the people have demanded for having non-official chairman; and

(c) if so, whether Government propose to amend the Regulation?

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI P. C. SETHI):
(a) Yes, Sir; the Dy. Commissioner, Andamans in the *Ex-Officio* Chairman of Port-Blair Municipal Board.

Throughout the country the same system does not prevail. The system of election of Chairman|President of Municipal Board|Council by the elected representatives themselves is in vague in almost all the Urban Local Bodies.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The matter is under consideration.

Buffer Stock of Rice

847. SHRI K. RAMAMURTHY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to export 10 lakh tonnes of rice;

(b) if so, the extent to which buffer stock of rice would get depleted; and

(c) whether it has been ensured that the rice-eating States would get their requirements met from the buffer stock?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO):

(a) Besides export of basmati rice, which is already on Open General Licence (OGL 3), Government is considering export of 10 lakh tonnes of rice during 1980-81.

(b) and (c). The quantity to rice proposed to be exported is small compared to the total stock available with the Government after taking care of the public distribution system, Food for Work, and other schemes, and, therefore, it will not affect the availability for internal requirements