

National Policy on Edible Oils

4782. DR. VASANT KUMAR PANDIT: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has prepared a National Policy on Edible Oils;

(b) if so, the details thereof with special reference to marketing, pricing and distribution;

(c) whether Government have taken into account the import of edible oil and oilseeds like palm oil and rapeseed; and

(d) what steps have been planned for cultivation of Soyabean in the country?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI V. C. SHUKLA): (a) to (c). In order to keep an effective control over the edible oils economy, advance planning is done by the Government for each Oil-Year (i.e. November-October). An Edible Oils Plan is prepared which makes an assessment of the situation which is likely to prevail in the succeeding Oil-Year, including estimates of the indigenous production of oilseeds/edible oils, likely demand hereafter and the gap that may exist during the Oil-Year under review.

The Edible Oils Plan for the current Oil-Year 1979-80 ending the 31st October, 1980 has the following main features:—

(1) In order to effectively bridge the gap between demand and indigenous supply, the present policy of imports of edible oils by the STC is being continued. The level of imports is being reviewed periodically, keeping in view the indigenous production, domestic and international price-trends, availability of foreign exchange and other relevant factors. The oils that are mainly being imported are Soyabean oil, Rapeseed oil, Palm oil and its refined derivatives.

(2) The public distribution system for edible oils has been further strengthened, expanded and the shortcomings in the way of its successful working sought to be removed. For direct consumption of edible oils, their sale through public distribution system has been given priority.

(3) In order to conserve the indigenous edible oils for direct consumption, Vanaspati industry has been permitted the use of imported edible oils to the extent of 95 per cent for the manufacture of Vanaspati.

(4) The prices at which imported oils are issued by the STC for public distribution and other end-uses are determined by the Government and reviewed periodically.

(5) Various steps, both short-term and long-term have been initiated to increase the indigenous production of Oilseeds and Oils.

(6) The State Governments had been advised to keep a special watch on the prices of edible oils. Their attention was drawn to the Pulses, Edible Oilseeds and Edible oils (Storage Control) Order, 1977 and the Price Display Orders. They had been requested to enforce these orders strictly and to bring to book anti-social elements violating these orders. Their attention had also been invited to the Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980 and they had been asked to enforce it also in order to bring down prices of essential commodities.

(d) The following steps have been planned for cultivation of soyabean in the country:—

(i) Under the Centrally-Sponsored Scheme for Soyabean Development, an Intensive Programme is under implementation in five States. Among the other things, the Scheme aims at demonstrations on farmers' fields, strengthening of seeds production

arrangements and training for farmers and extension workers;

(ii) In addition, States are undertaking soyabean development programme from their own funds;

(iii) Increasing the area under soyabean through catch cropping and inter-cropping;

(iv) Intensification of Research efforts; and

(v) Continuance of price-support operations for the marketing of Soyabean crop.

Installation of Gobar Gas Plants by Agricultural Finance Corporation

4783. DR. VASANT KUMAR PANDIT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Agricultural Finance Corporation has a plan to instal Gobar Gas Plants (Bio Gas Plants) throughout the country;

(b) if so, the plans per year and the areas selected for 1980-81 and 1982;

(c) how many of the above would be installed in Madhya Pradesh and particularly in the backward districts of Rajgarh, Vidisha and Guna;

(d) whether Government have made coordination with banks, State Government, Gram Panchayats to make the plan a success; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI MAGANBHAI BAROT): (a) No, Sir. Agricultural Finance Corporation, however, has agreed to extend support through its member banks to arrange loan facilities to farmers for setting up of gobar gas plants.

(b) and (c). In view of answer to (a) above question does not arise.

(d) and (e). Coordination Committees set up at the District and the State Level are expected to coordinate the implementation of such schemes. Banks operating in the area and the concerned State Government agencies are represented on these committees.

Publication of certain Articles in "Yogakshema" Journal of the LIC

4784. SHRIMATI PRAMILA DANDAVATE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Director of the Life Insurance Corporation had objected to the publication of certain articles in the "Yogakshema" Journal of the L.I.C.;

(b) whether the writer of the article had moved the Gujarat High Court in this regard; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI MAGANBHAI BAROT): (a) to (c). Shri Manubhai Shah, Executive Trustee of the Consumer Education and Research Centre, Ahmedabad, published a note entitled "A FRAUD ON POLICYHOLDERS". Shri N. C. Krishnan, Member of the LIC Board, dealt with some of the points of criticism contained in the aforesaid note in an article which appeared in "The Hindu" dated 6th November, 1978, and Shri Krishnan's article was reproduced in the "Yogakshema" dated 12th December, 1978. While Shri Shah's reply to Shri Krishnan's article was published in "The Hindu" dated 4th December, 1978, he wanted that the reply should also be published in the "Yogakshema". The Manager, Public Relations and Publicity, of the LIC regretted his inability to publish the reply in the "Yogakshema". Thereafter, Shri Shah moved the Gujarat High Court for a writ of mandamus directing the LIC to publish the reply in the "Yogakshema".