

(b) if so, when and what action has been taken and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI BHISHMA NARAIN SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The proposal is under consideration.

### Sugar

5. SHRIMATI PRAMILA DANDAVATE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of sugar in the country on 1st September, 1980;

(b) the details of the release of sugar in the free market and through the Fair Price Shops during this period;

(c) the estimated production of sugar during the ensuing season;

(d) the cost of production of sugar with break up; and

(e) the profit made by sugar magnates and whole-salers by selling sugar at Rs 8/50 to Rs. 16/- per Kg during this period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) The quantity of sugar with the sugar factories in the country as on 1st September, 1980 was about 3.1 lakh tonnes.

(b) the quantity of free sale sugar released under the voluntary price regulation scheme for 2½ months period from 1st September to 15th November, 1980 was about 3.90 lakh tonnes. As regards levy sugar, it has been released for distribution through fair price shops at 2.71 lakh tonnes per month from September to November 1980 in parity with the quantity released in earlier months.

(c) According to the present estimates the sugar production in 1980-81 season is expected to be around 52—54 lakh tonnes.

(d) As the investigation into the working of the sugar industry as also the cost of production of sugar had been entrusted to a High Level Committee headed by the Chairman, Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices, no detailed calculations of cost of production were made on the basis of final working results of 1979-80.

(e) Under the voluntary price regulation scheme operative from 1st September to 15th November 1980, free sale sugar was sold by the factories at an agreed price of Rs. 450 per quintal exclusive of excise duty and it was distributed by the State Governments at fixed retail prices which generally ranged from Rs. 5.50 to Rs. 6.50 per kg. There might have been some cases of malpractices involving sale at higher prices but these were dealt with by the State Governments under the existing statutory provisions.

### Branch Post Offices and PCOs in 24-Pargana Districts, West Bengal

6. SHRI MUKUNDA MANDAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Branch Post Offices and PCOs opened in the 24-Parganas District of West Bengal during the current year; and

(b) the target for the year 1980?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KARTIK ORAON): (a) The number of Branch Post Offices opened in 24 Parganas District during the financial year 1980-81 is 4. One P.C.O. has been opened so far since 1-4-1980.

(b) Target for the financial year 1980-81 is 22 Branch Post Offices and 6 P.C.Os. However, opening of P.C.Os. is subject to availability of Stores.