

(b) No, Sir. No State Government was allotted any special levy sugar quota for the festivals including Dussehra.

(c) The distribution of levy sugar at retail level is the responsibility of the State Governments. No report has been received from Orissa Government regarding improper distribution of the levy quota to the consumers.

(d) No, Sir.

#### Visit of Officials and Non-officials of National Cooperative Union to Foreign Country

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

(a) the names of non-officials and officials belonging to National Cooperative Union and other apex cooperative Institutions sponsored by the Government of India, who have gone abroad during the past three years; and

(b) the countries visited by them and the purposes for which they visited those countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): The information is given in the Statement laid on the table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-1414/80].

#### Distribution of Sugar by States

917. SHRI B. V. DESAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the steep rise in the price of free sale sugar in the market all over the country was due to the failure of the State Governments to make arrangements for the distribution of the non-levy sugar which the sugar manufacturers have offered to the Government for the festival season;

(b) whether State Governments were asked by the Ministry on 25th August to make arrangements to take the delivery of sugar from the Centre and their delay has resulted in the retail prices skyrocketing on the eve of Janamashtami;

(c) if so, whether the State governments were asked to fix their own channels of distribution of this sugar;

(d) whether the State Governments' inability to feed the fair price shops is the main reason for shortages in the fair price shops also; and

(e) whether Government have asked the State Governments to reorganise the body who will ensure fair distribution and also see that the commodities reach in time and are able to take possession of the commodities that will be supplied by the Centre for distribution in the fair price shops?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) to (e). Under the voluntary price regulation scheme operative during the festival period from 1st September to 15th November, 1980, free sale sugar was sold by the factories at a voluntarily agreed price of Rs. 450 per quintal exclusive of excise duty and it was distributed by the State Governments at retail prices fixed around Rs. 6/- per kg. through fair price shops/cooperative agencies or normal trade channels at their discretion. There might have been some cases of malpractices involving sale of sugar at higher prices but these were dealt with by the State Governments under the existing statutory provisions. According to reports received adequate arrangements were made by the State Governments for taking delivery of free sale sugar and its proper distribution. Specific directions were also recently issued to the State Governments asking them streamline their public distribution system to ensure equitable distribution of allotted sugar to all categories of consumers.