

prices during the last Onam Season through the Maveli Stores and Onam Markets, as a part of the Public Distribution System while the whole country was facing inflation;

(b) if so, whether Government of India propose to finance the Government of Kerala to carry on the Public Distribution System on a large scale; if so, the details of the assistance; and

(c) whether Government of India will ask the other State Governments to follow Kerala in this respect?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI BRAJA MOHAN MOHANTY):

(a) to (c). Government of India made advance allocations of some of the selected essential commodities to the States and Union Territories and took other necessary steps to ensure availability of these commodities during the festival season. Government of Kerala was able to distribute these commodities through the Public Distribution System which kept prices generally in check as in many other States during the festival season. Although there is no specific scheme to assist the State Governments to meet the operational requirements of the Public Distribution System the States are obtaining finances from Banks. The State Governments are periodically being advised to streamline the Public Distribution System according to the general guidelines issued from time to time.

Vizhinjam Fishing Harbour

207. SHRI A. NEELALOHITHADASAN: NADAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the reason for the delay in giving sanction to the 2nd and 3rd stages of the Vizhinjam Fishing Harbour Project of Kerala by the Government of India; and

(b) is it not a fact that various exploratory fishing organisations of Government of India have already assessed the fishery resources in the sea of Vizhinjam; if so, reasons why

Government of India - are delaying the sanction? -

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRIES OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) The project envisages a large outlay of Rs 3275 lakhs. It requires full justification from both the engineering and economic feasibility angles. These are being examined in consultation with State Government and Central Government Organisations such as Exploratory Fishery Project, Pre-Investment Survey Project on Fishing Harbours etc.

(b) The 1st phase of the harbour was completed in 74-75 after having incurred an expenditure of Rs. 220 lakhs. It was designed to cater to the requirements of both mechanised and non-mechanized boats. However, after the completion of the harbour, it has not been utilized fully. Exploratory data has been collected by various agencies, yet before taking a decision to invest such a large amount as mentioned above, it is necessary to have adequate resources data off Vizhinjam particularly in regard to Prawn and other resources. These are to be collected before taking a view on the project at Vizhinjam.

Pest attack on standing Kharif Paddy Crop

208. SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that agriculture productions in wide areas of the country are reeling under a severe and wide-spread viral pest attack on the standing kharif paddy; crop;

(b) if so, what are the preliminary estimates of crop loss in different States;

(c) what actions have been taken to diagnose the recent attack and suggest remedial (curative & preventive) measures and