

review the operation of existing irrigation projects in their States and prepare a programme of modernisation of the systems. In the approved outlay for the States, in the Irrigation Sector, for the Sixth Plan period 1980—85, a provision of Rs. 1000 crores is included for this purpose.

#### Modernisation of Gur and Khandsari Units

5557. SHRI R.N. RAKESH : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact arrears of canegrowers may well reach a staggering figure of Rs. 500 crores (Times of India dt. 15.3.83) and if so, steps proposed to rectify the situation and save poor farmers from ruin;

(b) whether Government are ensuring payment of statutory prices to canegrowers irrespective of whether sugarcane is supplied to the sugar factories or gur and khandsari units etc.; and

(c) whether Government have any plans to modernise gur and khandsari units and if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD) : (a) Ensuring payment of cane dues is the direct responsibility of the State Governments who have the necessary field organisations and powers to enforce payments. The Central Government issues directions to the State Governments, from time to time, for expeditious clearance of cane price arrears. Apart from asking the State Governments to take effective measures, the Central Government has taken steps through the provision of additional bank credit to mills and by monitoring the prices of sugar in the open market through regulated freesale sugar releases to see that the liquidity of the mills is maintained to enable them to pay the cane price dues.

(b) The Central Government fixes the statutory minimum cane price payable by vacuum pan sugar mills only. The producers of other sweeteners are in the unorganised sector and not bound to pay these prices.

Under clause 4 of the Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966, the Central Government, or the State Government with the concurrence of the Central Government, may fix the minimum price to be paid by producers of khandsari sugar. In view of the nature of the industry, as stated above, the Central Government exercises its power only on the recommendation of the State Government. During the current season, minimum prices for khandsari units have been fixed by only the Government of Andhra Pradesh after getting the approval of the Central Government. No other State Government has so far considered it necessary to fix such prices.

(c) Improvements in the gur and khandsari industries are sought to be made by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission through the State Khadi and Village Industries Boards and other registred societies. During 1981-82, improved crushers numbering 1326 were distributed. Of these 250 were power driven and 1076 bullock driven. Gur and khandsari units operating under the Khadi and Village Industries Commission's programme use improved equipment and machinery and other techniques available in the country. There is, at present, a programme of research and investigation to upgrade this technology.

#### Burning of Jhuggis of IARI Workers

5558. SHRI R.N. RAKESH : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have seen the PUCL Team Report concerning alleged burning of jhuggis of IARI workers; if so, the redressal steps proposed; and