

ties under the Ministry of Civil Supplies. The distribution of such essential commodities as are not specifically dealt with by the other Ministries, is to be dealt with in the Ministry of Civil Supplies. Moreover, as per a recent Order, Department of Food, which deals with foodgrains and sugar, has been brought together with Ministry of Civil Supplies which deals with edible oils to form a new Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies under independent charge of Minister of State.

Resolving Sugar Crisis by the Intervention of P.M.

1364. SHRI B V DESAI: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the crisis-ridden sugar industry has sought the Prime Minister's intervention for solving its pressing problems;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Indian Sugar Mills' Association have produced a consensus of points which were placed before Prime Minister;

(c) if so, what were the points placed before the Prime Minister; and

(d) to what extent the Ministry has examined the points raised by the Indian Sugar Mills' Association and what steps are being taken so far to meet their demands?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD): (a) and (b) A delegation of the Indian Sugar Mills' Association has submitted a representation to the Prime Minister mentioning the problems faced by the sugar industry.

(c) The main points made in the representation deal with the raising of the statutory minimum cane price to Rs. 15.50 per quintal with a corresponding increase in levy sugar prices, reduction in excise duty for stimulating consumption, more liberal bank credit and increase in the quantum of

bufferstock. Suggestion has also been made that factories may be permitted to pay initially only the statutory minimum cane price and to defer the payment of the difference between the statutory price and the State advised price.

(d) The points relating to the fixation of the statutory minimum cane price, levy sugar price, making available more liberal bank credit, creation of a bufferstock of 5 lakh tonnes and exports etc. have already been considered by the Government and decisions taken on these items. The statutory minimum cane price is a floor price below which the mills cannot pay to the cane grower. However, the compulsion to pay the State advised prices arises only when the mills themselves and the State agreements between the cane growers, themselves and the State Governments. With an effective monitoring of market and prices through a judicious use of the release mechanism the freesale sugar prices in the market have been kept at reasonable level ensuring that factories have enough viability to pay remunerative cane price to the grower.

Supply of Inferior Quality of Rice to Kerala

1365. SHRI A. NEELALOHITHADASAN NADAR: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact the quality of rice received by Kerala to be supplied through the Public Distribution System, though classified as superfine is of extremely poor quality; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to improve the quality?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND SUPPLIES (SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Some quantity of superfine rice received from Andhra Pradesh and Punjab during August, September and October, 1982, had higher percentage of disco-