

However, as many thousands rent cards had to be reviewed, the work regarding refunds/adjustments, where necessary, in the remaining cases is in hand and is expected to be completed in the next few months.

**Scheme for Elimination of Inter-mediarics in Food Procurement**

1999. SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any scheme before Government to eliminate the intermediaries in food procurement; and

(b) if so, the main features thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE ( SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE ) : (a) and (b) : It is the policy of the Government to eliminate intermediaries in the food procurement operations. The Food Corporation of India and the state procuring agencies have been advised to utilize the services of cooperatives to the maximum possible extent. The operations are being suitably strengthened for this purpose. The procuring agencies are also opening direct purchase centres where grain is purchased directly from cultivators.

**Steps to check Exploitation by Private Money Lenders**

2000. SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state that penal measures being taken against private money lenders who charge rate of interest, much more than the legally permissible maximum ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE ( SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE ) : The penal provisions are embodied in the legislation regulating Money-lending enacted by States and vary from State to State. Denial to the creditor of the legal machinery to sue the debtor and fine or imprisonment or both are the usual penal provisions under these Acts. The State Governments are expected to enforce these provisions.

**White Gur Injurious to Health**

2001. SHRI B.K. DASCHOWDHURY : SHRI J.B. PATNAIK :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING be pleased to state :

(a) whether white gur is poisonous and injurious to health as expressed by a sugarcane specialist in the news item, appearing in Hindustan Times of 1st November, 1971;

(b) whether any experiment has been carried out in this respect; and

(c) if so, the result thereof and the steps taken by Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING (PROF. D.P. CHATTOPADHYAYA) : (a) Gur containing sulphur dioxide, which is used as a bleaching agent, above the limit prescribed under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Rules can be injurious to health.

(b) Yes.

(c) The maximum daily acceptable intake of sulphur dioxide for man without causing any injury has been estimated at 0.35 mgm. Kg. body weight by the World Health Organisation. The State Health authorities have been addressed in the matter.

**Popularisation of Sunflower Cultivation**

2002. SHRI NIHAR LASKAR : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state ;

(a) the steps being taken to popularise the cultivation of sunflower on scientific lines ;

(b) whether any demonstrations of sunflower cultivation are being organised in different States; and

(c) if so, the main features thereof ?