

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SINDE):** (a) Current prices of these articles are generally higher than those prevailing five months back except that in the case of rice prices are lower in Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal and parts of Uttar Pradesh, in the case of wheat and atta prices are around the same level in Bihar and in the case of sugar free market prices are marginally lower in Assam and Maharashtra.

(b) Statement showing the retail prices of rice, atta, wheat and sugar on 15th September, 1972 and on 16th February, 1973 and the extent of rise, is laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-4267/73].

(c) Action taken/proposed to be taken by Government to check the price rise includes (a) strengthening of public distribution of foodgrains through fair price shops; (b) channelisation of all Government stocks through the fair price shops; (c) introduction of control on wholesale and retail prices of wheat products and regulation of the distribution of the same through fair price shops; (d) effective implementation of regulatory laws currently in force; (e) curb on consumption of foodgrains by enforcement of Guest Control Order and (f) takeover of wholesale trade in wheat and rice to ensure supplies of these grains to the consumers at reasonable prices.

#### **Cholera Germs in Drinking Water in Villages**

868. **SHRI NARENDRA SINGH BISHT:**

**SHRI HUKAM CHAND KACHWAI:**

Will the Minister of **WORKS AND HOUSING** be pleased to state:

(a) whether cholera germs are available in the drinking water of many villages in the country;

(b) if so, the number of such villages; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND IN THE MINISTRY OF WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI OM MEHTA):** (a) No general survey has been carried out in this regard in the country. However, the Institute of Preventive Medicine, Hyderabad undertook examination of unprotected water supplies in the districts of Hyderabad, Nizamabad and Khammam of Andhra Pradesh. Out of 230 samples examined in this study, in 40 samples vibro cholera (NAG) were isolated.

(b) According to available information about 33,857 villages in the country were cholera endemic in the beginning of the Fourth Plan.

(c) Rural Water Supply is a State Sector Programme. The State Governments/Union Territory Administrations have been advised to accord priority for supply of protected water to cholera endemic villages.

Under the Central Scheme for Accelerated Rural Water Supply, initiated from 1971-72, priority has also been accorded to villages affected by public health hazards including cholera endemic villages.

#### **Cases of Blindness in India**

870. **SHRI R. K. SINHA:**

**SHRI RAJDEO SINGH:**

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

(a) whether Government have seen the press reports appearing on the 22nd January, 1973 reporting the address given by Mr. John Wilson,

Director of the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind, London while addressing 23rd All India Ophthalmological Conference to the effect that 12,000 babies go blind in India every year because of ocular malnutrition; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto and the remedial measures proposed to be adopted to meet the situation?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING (SHRI KONDAJJI BASAPPA): (a) Yes,

(b) Recent studies have shown that oral administration of a single massive dose of 2,00,000 I.U. of vitamin A in oil every six months is likely to protect children from vitamin A deficiency. A programme to cover 12 million children upto the age of 5 years in areas with high incidence of vitamin A deficiency is being implemented. A provision of Rs. 40 lakhs has been made in the Fourth Five Year Plan.

#### 'Delhi's Vegetable Poisonous'

871. SHRI R. K. SINHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been invited to the news item appearing in the *National Herald* dated the 31st December, 1972 under the heading '1/4 of Delhi's vegetables poisonous' as they contain excessive residues of DDT and BHC and that butter samples from the Delhi area revealed the existence of pesticidal residues above the permissible levels; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto and the remedial steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE): (a) Yes, Sir,

(b) The Indian Agricultural Research Institute had undertaken a small study on the residues on vegetables marketed in and around Delhi. 60 samples of 8 vegetables were drawn and analysed in 1972 and it was found that about 25 per cent of the samples showed residues of DDT or BHC in excess of the limits laid down jointly by the Food and Agricultural Organisation and the World Health Organisation. The Ministry of Health, who implement the Food Adulteration Act have also been considering prescribing pesticides residue limits on vegetables. No systematic work has been done on estimating the pesticidal residues on vegetable produce collected from the market on a regular basis. With the enforcement of the Insecticides Act, a Central Insecticides Laboratory and other Insecticides Testing laboratories are being set up which will monitor the pesticides residue level for different crops to keep it within specified limits. The enforcement of the Act will also enable the regulation of import, manufacture, sale, distribution and use of various pesticides in the country with a view to safeguarding the health of human beings and animals.

#### Shortage of Foodgrains at Fair Price Shops in States

872. SHRI RAMSHEKHAR PRASAD SINGH:

SHRI BHOLA MANJHI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the fact that there is a shortage of foodgrains at fair price shops in every State;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to improve the supply position?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE): (a) and (b). Keeping in view of the over-