

(b) and (c). The Secretary, Shahi Masjid has lodged a complaint to this effect with the Lt. Governor, Delhi, who is looking into the matter.

Audit of Accounts of Hindustani Dwakhana, Delhi

8743. Shri Ishaq Sambhall:
 Shri Chandra Shekhar Singh:
 Shri Ramji Ram:
 Shri Ghayoor Ali Khan:
 Shri K. M. Madhukar:
 Shri Ramavatar Shastri:
 Shri Latafat Ali Khan:
 Shri Satya Narain Singh:
 Shri M. Meghachandra:

Will the Minister of Health and Family Planning be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Local Examiner of Delhi Administration examined the accounts of the Hindustani Dwakhana;

(b) whether it is also a fact that on the basis of this report, an audit team of Delhi Administration audited the accounts and found misappropriation; and

(c) the steps the Tibbia College Board has taken against persons found responsible for misappropriation?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Health and Family Planning (Shri B. S. Murthy): (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) The Tibbia College Board has suspended the Assistant Accountant of the Hindustani Dwakhana, and the matter is being investigated further by the Board.

Price of Opium

8744. Shri S. S. Kothari: Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that opium is purchased from cultivators at about

Rs. 30 per kg. and is exported at a price of about Rs. 800, per kg.;

(b) if so, the reasons for retaining such a big margin of profit; and

(c) whether Government propose to give more remunerative prices to the farmers?

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance (Shri Morarji Desai): (a) and (b). In 1966-67 the price at which opium was purchased from farmers ranged from Rs. 30 to Rs. 36 per kg. at 70 degree consistence depending on the yield tendered by the cultivators. As a further incentive, cash prize is awarded to those farmers whose average yield is above a prescribed limit. The overall average price works out to about Rs. 36 per kg. at 70 degree consistence. Opium is exported at about 90 degree consistence, after drying and the price payable to the cultivators works out to about Rs. 46 per kg. at 90 degree consistence. Before export, transport and processing charges have to be incurred. It is not a fact that the opium is exported at a price of about Rs. 800 per kg. The present export price works out to about Rs. 86 per kg.

(c) In addition to the amount realised from the sale of opium to the Government, farmers realise an appreciable amount from the sale of seeds in the market. The prices payable to the farmers for the opium tendered by them are reviewed every year having regard to the total realisations from the poppy crop and realisations from other comparable crops and as far as Government are aware, the present prices of opium are remunerative to the farmers. The question, whether the present prices given to the farmers need any modification, will be examined when the question of the prices for the next crop season is considered.