

AERIAL VISIT BY P.M. TO DROUGHT-AFFECTED AREAS

1502. SHRI D. N. PATODIA : Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Prime Minister had made an aerial survey of some of the drought-affected areas in the country recently;

(b) if so, the names of different parts of the country visited by her and what are her findings;

(c) whether concerted efforts are being made to avert the recurrence of droughts in these areas in future; and

(d) whether any scheme based on the findings of the Prime Minister has been drawn up for Central assistance to these areas ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) : (a) and (b). The Prime Minister did not make an aerial survey of drought affected areas of the country. She visited some parts of Allahabad district in U.P. on the 14th and 15th September, 1968, and Jaisalmer and Barmer districts in Rajasthan on the 2nd November, 1968, in order to see for herself the drought conditions prevailing there. She also took the opportunity of discussing the relief measures with the representatives of the U.P. and the Rajasthan Governments.

(c) Attention is invited to the reply to Starred Question No. 590 given in the Lok Sabha on 21-8-1968.

(d) Certain suggestions which have emerged as a result of her discussions in the course of her tour are being pursued.

ERADICATION OF DROUGHT

1503. SHRI D. N. PATODIA : Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that in a recent statement, the Prime Minister is reported to have stated that Government are taking steps to eradicate drought for ever in the country; and

(b) if so, the details of the steps proposed to be taken to attain this objective ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) : (a) and (b). A statement is laid on the Table of the House. [*Placed in Library. See No. LT-2239/68.*]

INCREASE IN PRICE OF SOYABEEN OIL BY S.T.C.

1504. SHRI MEETHALAL MEENA :
SHRI R. K. AMIN :
SHRI S. P. RAMAMOORTHY :
SHRI R. R. SINGH DEO :
SHRI S. K. TAPURIAH :

Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the State Trading Corporation have made any upward revision in the prices of imported Soyabean Oil during the last six months;

(b) if so, the number of times the revisions have been made and the amount thereof;

(c) the reasons therefor;

(d) whether there are complaints from various business houses that the State Trading Corporation have made huge profits on buffer stock of Soyabean Oil imported from America and other countries; and

(e) if so, the reaction of Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) : (a) and (b). A statement showing the prices of soyabean oil fixed from time to time since April, 1968 for supply to vanaspati factories in the different zones is laid on the Table of the House. [*Placed in Library. See No. LT-2240/68.*]

(c) Except on May 27th, when a uniform average price was fixed in all the zones, the prices were fixed in relation to the prevailing price of groundnut oil in the different zones. However, the prices fixed on 9th August have not been increased despite the further increases in the price of groundnut oil which have occurred after the date.