

(b) The lion population has grown from 239 in May, 1985 to 304 in May, 1995.

(c) and (d) An area of 1412.12 sq. km. of the Gir forest which is the habitat of lions, has been constituted into a protected area under the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. The Asiatic Lion is fully protected against hunting and commercial exploitation. Habitat protection and management activities such as habitat improvement, water conservation, wildlife health monitoring etc., are also undertaken. Under in situ conditions, breeding takes place if favourable conditions are available to the lions. No artificial breeding programme is necessary. As a result of these measures, the population of Asiatic Lions has gradually increased from 177 in 1968 to 304 in 1995.

(e) and (f) Yes, Sir. After detailed scientific investigations the Kuno-Palpur sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh was selected for establishing a second free-ranging population of the Asiatic lion. The project will be implemented over a 8-10 year period. At present in the first phase, preliminary habitat and prey base development and eco-development works are being undertaken and actual shifting of some lions will take place in the second phase, which will start around the year 2000.

[English]

Open Sale of Wheat and Rice by FCI

1025. SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the quantity of wheat and rice sold by FCI under the open sale scheme to mill owners and the small traders during each of the last two years;

(b) whether the Government are aware that the mill owners made bulk purchase and small traders could not avail of the benefit of the scheme;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps Government propose to take to ensure that small traders also get the benefit of this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) to (d) The information is being collected from Food Corporation of India and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Justice for the Victims of Negligence

1026. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the legal report captioned "No justice for victims of negligence" appearing in the 'Times of India' dated June 17, 1997 pointing out the inadequacy of law for punishing the guilty for blatant negligence, where delay in the process dictates the force of law;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether the Government propose to amend the law and procedure evolving a well studied law of torts; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The section 304A of the Indian Penal Code provides for punishment for causing death by negligence. At present there is no proposal to amend the law as the existing penal provisions are quite adequate.

Pollution Measures

1027. SHRI KESHAB MAHANTA : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of air and water pollution measures adopted by the Fertilizers plant of H.F.C. Namrup;

(b) whether the Government are aware that inadequate attention paid by the fertilizer plants in controlling the air and water pollution;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken to ensure the control of air and water pollution by the fertilizer plants?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) The following air and water pollution control measures have been undertaken by the Namrup I, II & III units of Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Ltd. (HFC)

(i) Conversion of the Sulphuric acid plant in Namrup I unit to Double Conversion Double Absorption (DCDA) system.

- (ii) Installation of a facility in Namrup-III unit for treatment of hexavalent chromium bearing liquid effluent so as to contain chromate content level within the permissible limit.
- (iii) Recycling the arsenic bearing effluent from the gas purification section of Namrup II plant.

(b) to (d) The State Pollution Control Boards monitor the quality of the effluents discharged by the industrial units in their respective States and ensure compliance of the prescribed pollution control standards. In so far as the fertilizer units under the administrative control of the Department of Fertilizers are concerned, schemes for ensuring adherence of pollution control measures in the plants of Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Ltd. and Fertilizer Corporation of India Ltd. have been put under implementation. The pollution control measures required in the plants of Paradeep Phosphates Ltd. have been studied by the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute and its recommendations have been evaluated.

Non-Placement of Indent to H.P.C. by Super Bazar

1028. SHRI JAI PRAKASH (HARDOI) : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Super Bazar, NCCF and Kendriya Bhandar are not placing any indent to the Hindustan Paper Corporation Limited for the supply of paper required by the Government departments but the same are being purchased from other manufacturers/suppliers;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken in that direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUVANS PRASAD SINGH) : (a) to (c) According to the Information furnished by the Super Bazar, NCCF and Kendriya Bhandar, they receive orders for supply of paper in small quantities from various Government Departments whereas M/s Hindustan Paper Corporation Ltd. (HPC) insists on supplies in bulk of one wagon load or 25 MT of paper at a time. The HPC also demands 100% advance payment against proforma invoice raised by them. Purchase of paper by Super Bazar, NCCF and Kendriya Bhandar in the required quantities from HPC Ltd. will be facilitated if HPC Ltd relax their norms of supplies.

Procurement Price of Wheat

1029. SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to increase the procurement price of wheat;

(b) whether some State Governments have requested in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government after taking into account the recommendations of the CACP, views of the State Governments and Central Ministries and all other relevant factors while in the opinion of the Government are important for fixing of minimum support price, has fixed the minimum support price (MSP) of wheat for 1996-97 crop to be marketed in 1997-98 season at Rs. 415 per quintal against the MSP of Rs. 405 per quintal recommended by the CACP. The MSP fixed for 1997-98 season marks an increase of Rs. 35 over the price fixed for the previous season. The Government, after taking into account the requests received from the Governments of Punjab and Haryana for further hike in the MSP already fixed, decided to grant a central bonus of Rs. 60 per quintal for the sale of wheat to the Central pool with effect from 1.4.1997 to 30.6.97. The hike in the MSP including bonus thus works out to Rs. 95 per quintal.

[Translation]

Closed Sugar Mills

1030. SHRI NIHAL CHAND CHAUHAN : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of sugar mills closed at present, State-wise;

(b) the reasons for their closure;

(c) whether the Government propose to revive these closed mills;.

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?