

ment announced that widows would be paid @ Rs. 1000/- p.m. till one employable son/daughter becomes an earning member in addition to the pension from 16.6.1990.

Suspension of Chief Executives of Fertilizer Companies

635. SHRI SHANTILAL PURUSHOTTAMDAS PATEL:
SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV:
SHRI HET RAM:
SHRI RAM BAHADUR SINGH:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether chief executives of some fertilizer companies were recently suspended by the Union Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the charges against them;

(c) whether any inquiry has been conducted into the charges levelled against them; and

(d) if so, the outcome of the inquiry and the action taken or proposed to be taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI UPENDRA NATH VERMA): (a) to (d). Serious allegations had been made in respect of purchases of jute and HDPE bags made through the Central Purchase Committee that had been constituted to recommend the purchase of jute and HDPE bags for public/cooperative sector fertilizer companies. Preliminary report received from CBI alleged that the members of the Central Purchase Committee entered into a criminal

conspiracy in pursuance of which they misused their official position and showed undue favours to private suppliers, thereby causing substantial pecuniary loss to the various public/cooperative fertilizer companies. Pending further enquiry by the CBI, the Government issued orders regarding suspension of the Managing Director, Krishak Bharati Cooperative Ltd. (KRIBHCO); the Managing Director, National Fertilisers Ltd. (NFL); and Chairman and Managing Director, Rashtriya Chemicals & Fertilisers Ltd. (RCF), who were all members of the Central Purchase Committee.

2. The CBI has also registered a regular case against the afore-mentioned persons. The case is under investigation.

Involvement of Private Sector in Port Operations

636. SHRI SHANTILAL PURUSHOTTAMDAS PATEL:
SHRI HET RAM:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been an overall increase in the traffic handled by the major ports during the last three years;

(b) whether Government have considered the possibility of involving private sector in port operations; and

(c) if so, the details thereof including the areas where private participation has been found feasible and the terms and conditions, if any, for such participation?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir.

(c) An Inter-Ministerial Group has been