

Defence.

[*Translation*]

Hike in Price of Essential Commodities

7144. SHRIKALPNATH SONKAR: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that there has been a steep hike in the prices of sugar, rice, wheat, mustard oil and other food items in recent months; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to reduce the price?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI RAM PUJAN PATEL): (a) There has been a mixed trend in the behaviour of prices of selected essential items during the last 20 weeks (between 25.11.1989 and 14.4.1990). The Wholesale Price Indices (WPI) of some commodities like rice, wheat, *jowar*, gram, onions, chillies, sugar, *khandsari* during this period exhibited a declining trend. The WPI of some other commodities like *arhar*, fish, groundnut oil, mustard oil, coconut oil and gingelly oil have shown a rising trend during this period.

(b) The Government has accorded highest priority to check the rising trend in prices of essential commodities. Both long term and short term measures are being taken for the purpose. The measures taken by the Government broadly include steps to increase production of essential commodities like sugar, edible oils and tea etc. which are in short supply; effective procurement and buffer stocking operations of foodgrains; strengthening of Public Distribution System; monitoring of price and availability situation; strict enforcement of the provisions of the Essential Commodities Act and other regulatory measures; and augmenting domestic

supplies through imports, wherever necessary, to check any abnormal rise in prices.

[*English*]

Construction of Godowns in Kerala by Central Warehousing Corporation

7145. SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Warehousing Corporation is undertaking construction of godowns in the State of Kerala during the current year; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI RAM PUJAN PATEL): (a) At present Central Warehousing Corporation has no proposal to construct any warehouse in the State of Kerala, during the current year.

(b) Does not arise.

[*Translation*]

Increase in Number of Doctors in ESI Hospitals

7146. SHRI SARJU PRASAD SAROJ: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of Government has been drawn to the news-items appearing in the Navbharat Times dated 7 April, 1990 captioned "paise to katate hain par uchit ilaj nahin";

(b) if so, the action being taken by Government in this regard; and

(c) the efforts being made by Government to increase the number of doctors in