

FPIs in North East

*290. SHRI URKHAO GWRA BRAHMA: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of Food Processing Industries set up in the country and the total amount of money spent for the same, during the current financial year;
- (b) whether it is a fact that the existence of such industries in the North-Eastern region particularly in Assam;
- (c) if so, whether there is any policy of Government in that regard; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM): (a) Food processing industries operate both in the organized and unorganized sectors. Most of the processed food items have been exempted from the purview of licensing under the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, 1951. Given this position, information on the number of units and investment thereon is not maintained centrally. However, as per the Annual Survey of Industries for 1998-99, the total number of factories in the food and Beverage sector was 23,831 and the cumulative invested capital thereon was about Rs. 52,630.00 crores.

The Ministry of Food Processing Industries implements Fruit Products Order (FPO), 1955 to ensure manufacture of processed fruit and vegetable products under hygienic and sanitary conditions. Till 1st January, 2002, 5569 licenses have been granted under FPO.

The Ministry of Food Processing Industries does not set up food processing industries on its own. The Ministry, however, provides financial assistance through its plan schemes for development of processed food sector, including setting up of food processing industries. During the year 2001 -2002, financial assistance of Rs. 8.40 crores has been extended for 48 proposals for setting up/modernization/expansion of food processing industries in the country besides those assisted in the North Eastern Region.

(b) to (d) During 2001-2002, financial assistance was provided under the plan scheme to the tune of Rs. 150.25 lakhs in the North Eastern Region to set up 5 food processing units. Out of the 5, financial assistance of Rs. 74.33 lakhs was provided to 2 units in Assam.

The Ministry of Food Processing Industries is required to spend at least 10% of annual plan budget for North Eastern Region, as per direction of Government. The Ministry under its plan scheme provides a higher quantum of assistance to 'difficult' areas which includes NE States as compared to assistance in general areas. As against the prescribed minimum 10% of the outlay, the Ministry has been expending more than 10% during the last four years.

The Government has also approved Technology Mission for integrated development of horticulture in NE Region including Sikkim. Under this Mission, Mini Mission IV deals with processing of horticulture produce. During 2001-2002, assistance of Rs. 330 crores has been approved under Mini Mission IV.

Setting up of fertilizer factory in Tripura

*291. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal for setting-up a fertilizer factory has been initiated by the Tripura Government;

(b) if so, the present status of the proposal; and

(c) whether the proposal would be conceded to by the Central Government and the setting-up of the fertilizer factory expedited?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA): (a) to (c) The State Government of Tripura has been exploring the possibility of setting up a fertilizer plant in the State utilizing natural gas available in the region. A private sector fertilizer company has evinced interest for setting up a urea plant in Tripura. There is no licensing requirement for investment in fertilizer sector.