

(b) if so, whether despite this over-all surplus of sugar this year, 154 lakh tonnes of sugar was imported during the year; and

(c) the steps, if any, taken to restrict the imports of sugar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) to (b) The carry-over stocks of sugar in the country at the beginning of the current sugar season 1999-2000 (Oct.-Sept.) was 67.23 lakh tonnes (Provisional). The production of sugar during the current sugar season is estimated to be around 160.00 lakh tonnes. A quantity of 8.58 lakh tonnes (Provisional) of sugar was imported by various parties under Open General Licence during the Financial Year 1998-99. During the current Financial Year 1999-2000, upto 15.11.99, a quantity of about 7.75 lakh tonnes (Provisional) of sugar was imported by various parties.

(c) The Government have levied a basic customs duty of 25% plus a surcharge of 10% and a countervailing duty of Rs. 850/- per tonne on imported sugar. Further, with a view to regulating sale of imported sugar in the domestic market, the Government have ammended the Sugar (Control) Order, 1966 and introduced the release mechanism under which all importers of sugar are required to sell their stocks of imported sugar as per the monthly release orders issued by the Directorate of Sugar, Department of Sugar and Edible Oils.

#### **Protection of Rights of Consumers by Courts**

984. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government aware that consumer courts in the country are not in a position to provide speedy and inexpensive justice to consumers;

(b) whether corruption has been the most significant factor in repressing the rights of consumers;

(c) whether Government have not taken any steps to amend the Consumer Protection Act to facilitate reforming of Consumer Courts; and

(d) if so, the steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA

[10 December, 1999]

RAJYA SABHA

PRASAD): (a) As reported by State/UT Governments, about 50% of the cases disposed so far by the consumer courts, are disposed within the time frame as stipulated in the Consumer Protection Rules. However, the disposal of the cases by the consumer courts in the country are affected by the inadequate infrastructure, frequent adjournments, non-filling of posts of the Presidents/Members in the consumer courts etc.

(b) No, Sir. The provision of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 are quite effective to protect the rights of the Consumers.

(c) and (d) The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 has been amended in 1991 and 1993. Action is being taken to further amend the said Act, to facilitate the consumer courts to dispose of the cases speedily and also to make the Act more effective and purposeful.

### **Medical Fraud at Super Bazar**

985. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to refer in answer to Unstarred Question 516, given in the Rajya Sabha on the 24th November, 1997 and state:

(a) whether the Chief Vigilance officer of the Super Bazar has since investigated into medical fraud at Super Bazar;

(b) if so, the details of employees found involved in the lapses; and

(c) the details of action taken against those employees/suppliers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) to (c) The Super Bazar, Delhi has informed that on the basis of a complaint received from the Manager (drugs Department) Super Bazar in connection with procurement of medicines on inflated price list from M/s. Dee Pharma, investigation was conducted in the matter by the Vigilance Department of Super Bazar. Two officials of Super Bazar namely Shri Vijay Kumar, the then Asstt. General Manager and Shri R.C. Ohri, Sales Asstt, of Drugs Department were found responsible for the lapses. The Super Bazar has initiated disciplinary action against both of them and charge sheets have been issued.