

ELECTRONICS AND DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. R. KUMARAMAN-GALAM): Yes, Sir.

(b) The Atomic Energy (Control of Irradiation of Food) Rules, 1990 have already been published in the Gazette of India dated March 2, 1991 for the control of food irradiation. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare are in the process of notifying the amendments to the Prevention of Food Adulteration Rules, 1955 in order to enable domestic consumption of irradiated food.

Manufacture of LAB

1442. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of licences/promoters who have applied for permission to manufacture linear alkyl benzene (LAB) from the kerosene stage with names of the units;

(b) whether Government have taken any decision on the issue; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI CHINTA MOHAN): (a) After the liberalisation of industrial licensing policy in July, 1991, Linear Alkyl Benzene (LAB) is exempt from the licensing provisions. The promoters are free to manufacture LAB from either kerosene or some other stage. No permission is required in this regard.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Shortage of Life Saving Drugs

1443. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that there is acute shortage of life saving drugs like GARDINAL SODIUM, METHOTREXATE, DIOGOXIN PG etc. for the last two weeks is reported in the Hindustan Times dated 16th June, 1992;

(b) whether Government are also aware that recent hike in the price of raw material imported for manufacture of these drugs is responsible for raising drug prices as reported in the Hindustan Times dated 24th June, 1992; and

(c) if so, what steps Government have taken so far to bring down the prices of such life saving drugs like anti-cancer, anti-epilepsy and anti-tuberculosis etc.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS (SHRI CHINTA MOHAN): (a) The position of the reported shortages has been analysed. Most of the shortages so reported are of specific brands and of medicines having low turn-over. In most such cases, equivalent medicines are available in other brands or generic name. In case of Vitamin C, there were problems in regard to pricing of bulk drug and formulations which have since been tackled and the situation should normalise soon.

(b) In a situation of rising costs of inputs, certain amount of increase in prices is inevitable. The increase is relatively higher in those drugs