

Zero duty import of raw and white sugar

3091. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government allowed zero duty import of raw sugar and white sugar to cope up with domestic demands during 2009-10 at fair prices;

(b) whether international raw sugar prices has shot up ever since India announced the zero duty import, from around US \$ 280 per tonne to \$ 380 per tonne; and

(c) if so, whether this would lead to higher sugar prices in domestic market than stabilized fair prices envisaged earlier?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) Yes, Sir. In order to augment domestic availability of sugar, the Central Government has permitted duty free import of white/refined sugar upto 1 million ton under OGL by the designated agencies upto 01.08.2009 *vide* notification dated 17.04.2009. Further, the Government has also permitted sugar factories to import raw sugar under Advance Authorization Scheme upto 30.09.2009 and under Open General License (OGL) upto 01.08.2009 and sell the processed raw sugar within India so as to cope up with the domestic demand in the current sugar season and during 2009-10 sugar season.

(b) International prices of raw sugar have increased due to global deficit in sugar including decline in sugar production in India. The futures price of raw sugar were quoted on 30th January, 2009 for the month of March, 2009 was 12.67 c/lb (approx. US \$ 280 per ton). It is being quoted at 18.43 c/lb (approx. US \$406 per ton) on 27th July, 2009 for the month of October, 2009.

(c) The domestic price of a commodity including sugar in the open market depends upon a number of factors *viz.* supply, demand, international prices and market sentiments etc. As such, it is not possible to indicate the impact of import of sugar on prevailing price situation in domestic market.

Growing population and economic implications

3092. PROF. P. J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the population of the country is growing exponentially;

(b) whether this will have a debilitating effect on the economic development of the country;

(c) whether it is also a fact that some of the States are lagging behind in achieving the population stabilization target; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and Government's action thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) No. Though India's population has increased from 36 crore in 1951 to 102.87 crore in 2001, the country has witnessed significant decline in both fertility and mortality. The crude birth rate, which was recorded at 40.8 per 1000 in 1951, has declined to 23.1 in 2007, as per the estimates available from the Sample Registration System (SRS). The crude death rate, which was recorded at 25.1 per 1000 in 1951, has declined to 7.4 in 2007. Infant mortality rate has come down from 146 in 1951-61 to 55 in 2007. Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has come down from 6.0 in 1951 to 2.7 in 2007.

(c) and (d) Some States are lagging behind in achieving population stabilization. 5 States namely Assam, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana, Orissa, are near to achieving the replacement level as they have attained TFR between 2.3 to 2.7. Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, may not be able to achieve the replacement level in the near future as these States have TFR from 3.1 to 3.9 as per SRS 2007.

The Government is committed to give focused attention to the demographically weak performing States through provisioning of all kinds of support including public awareness programme under NRHM, for which the States are free to project their priorities depending on local needs to further the task of population stabilization in the States specific Project Implementation Plans (PIPs).

Upgradation of small scale pharma units

3093. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the investment, value-wise, that is required for infrastructure, machinery changes, etc., that a small scale pharmaceutical company set up before 2001 would have to spent for upgradation to schedule M;

(b) whether Government has failed to make budgetary provision for funds since 2001 leading to closure of small scale pharma units and vaccine units; and

(c) if so, the reaction of Government in light of 181st report of the Standing Committee on Subordinate Legislation in Rajya Sabha in February, 2009 to provide level playing field to the small scale pharma units?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) The Department of Pharmaceuticals has informed that as per available information, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises has a scheme for Technology Upgradation of Micro and Small Enterprises namely credit Linked Capital Subsidy Scheme (CLCSS) for approved 48 Sub-Sectors, including Pharmaceuticals Sub-Sector. Under this scheme 15% capital subsidy is provided upto a loan of Rs. 1.0 crore. Year-wise fund released under CLCSS for 48 various Sub-Sector including Pharmaceuticals Sub-Sector is as follows:—