

linked to 8.5 per cent recovery for 1985-86 season and the fixation of ex-factory levy prices based on revised Statutory Minimum Price of sugarcane; (ii) advance announcement of statutory minimum cane price of Rs. 17.00 per quintal linked to 8.5 per cent recovery for the season 1986-87; (iii) rebate in Excise Duty for excess production during October and November, 1985; (iv) incentives to the new sugar factories/expansion projects by way of higher free-sale quota and concessional rate of excise duty; (v) continuance of an extra levy price of Rs. 26/- per quintal during 1985-86 season for weak units having capacity below 1250 TCD installed prior to 1.10.1985 etc.

Drug addiction in the country .

@*470-A. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of drug addicts is increasing in the country;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and who are the victims; and

(c) what steps are being taken to prevent smuggling of heroin and allied drugs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WELFARE (DR. RAJENDRA KUMARI BAJPAI): (a) and (b) No such assessment is available. However, this Ministry has commissioned in January 1985 a study of the drug abuse situation amongst students in four Metropolitan cities and five other towns of the country the results of which are expected to be available by mid 1986.

(c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

A comprehensive legislation has been enacted by the Parliament called "The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 (61 of 1985)" which has

come into force all over the country on 14th November, 1985. Under the Act the minimum punishment is 10 years rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 1 lakh which may be extended upto 20 years and Rs. 2 lakhs respectively. In respect of repeated offences the minimum punishment is 15 years R.I. extendable to 30 years, and a minimum fine of Rs. 1.5 lakhs which may go up to Rs. 3 lakhs. The courts have been empowered to impose fines exceeding these limits. Besides, offences such as attempt, abetment, conspiracy and preparation to commit an offence have been made cognizable.

Under this Act the Central Government has invested the officers belonging to the enforcement agencies/departments with the powers of officer in-charge of a police station for investigation of offences.

The anti-smuggling machinery along the sea coast and the land borders as well as the international airports in the country has been strengthened. Dog-squads have been pressed into service at the major airports. Special Narcotic Cells have been constituted in the major airports/sea ports for keeping a strict vigil on the smuggling of the drugs. The strategy against smugglers and drug traffickers is being constantly review and updated. Since the Pakistan Border is a major conduit for smuggling, special attention is being paid to this area by the appropriate authorities.

Action under the Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities Act (COFEPSA Act) has been intensified in respect of drug traffickers.

The import, manufacture and sale of methaqualone (mandrax) which has recently emerged as an important item of smuggling from India has been banned by the issue of a notification issued under Section 26(A) of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act 1940 (23 of 1940).

@Previously Starred Question No. 433 Transferred from the 18th December, 1985.