

estimated FOB costs being US dollars 262 million and Australian dollars 118.6 million respectively.

(d) Wheat has been imported with a view to building up huffer stocks, and as a measure against pressure on prices.

Shortage of edible oils in the country

401. SHRIMATI HAMIDA HABIB-ULLAH:

SHRIMATI RATAN KUMARI:

SHRI SADASHIV BAGAITKAR:

SHRI SATYA PAL MALIK:

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been continued shortage of vegetable and other edible oils in various parts of the country;

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

(c) what was the supply position of edible oils as against the demand during 1981 and the reasons for its continued shortage;

(d) what measures are contemplated by Government to ensure increased availability of edible oils and to meet the gap between its demand and supply; and

(e) by when the country is likely to attain self-sufficiency in edible oils?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRIES OF AGRICULTURE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI MOHAMMED USMAN ARIF): (a) to (e) In the context of existing gap between demand and supply of edible oils from indigenous sources, which is estimated to be ranging between 10 lakh to 12 lakh tonnes per year, possibility of localised shortages in certain parts of the country cannot be ruled out despite substantial imports.

The supply of imported edible oils in the oil-year 1980-81 for the public distribution system (Nov.-Oct.) was 4.25 lakh tonnes as against 3.5 lakh tonnes in the previous year. The production of vanaspati during the oil-year 1980-81 was 8.2 lakh tonnes as against 6.8 lakh tonnes in the previous year.

To ensure improved availability of edible oils and meet the gap between demand and supply, several long-term and short-term measures have been adopted by the Government. Briefly stated, the following steps are being taken by the Government:

(i) Increasing production and productivity of traditional and non-traditional oilseeds and oils;

(ii) Planned efforts to maximise exploitation of the untapped potentials of the oilseeds;

(iii) Policy of announcing support price for oilseeds;

(iv) Import of adequate quantity of edible oils;

(v) Enforcement of Storage Control Orders and other enactments to regulate trade in oilseeds and oils.

With a view to encouraging the Vanaspati industry to tap fully the potentials of indigenous oils from non-traditional sources as well as oils of tree and forest origin, and minor oilseeds, an appropriate oil usage policy by the vanaspati industry has been recently adopted and announced by Government. The proportion of imported edible oils in the manufacture of vanaspati has been revised from 70 per cent (effective) to 60 per cent (gross) of the total requirements. This is expected to encourage greater usage of indigenous oils. Also the price of imported oils supplied to the manufacturers of vanaspati has been revised to Rs. 8,500/- per M.T. from Rs. 7,210/- per M.T. to reduce the

gap between domestic oil prices and prices of imported oils. Vanaspati manufacturers have voluntarily announced a price restraint by fixing the ex-factory price of a 16.5 kg. tin of vanaspati so as not to exceed Rs. 217 inclusive of excise duty from Rs. 192 earlier fixed by them.

The prices of imported oils issued through Public Distribution System have also been suitably adjusted recently by fixing prices of all varieties of oils supplied to the State Governments by the State Trading Corporation at Rs. 8,500 per M.T. to maintain a reasonable parity with the domestic oil prices to sub-serve the producers' as well as consumers' interests.

The cumulative effect of all these long-term as well as short-term policies is expected to contribute towards achieving self-sufficiency and improving availability of edible oils in the country.

Allotment of railway rakes for transportation of coal

402. SHRI LAL K. ADVANI;
SHRI JAGANNATHRAO
JOSHI;
SHRI RAM LAKHAN
PRASAD GUPTA;
SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR.

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state the number of railway rakes for transportation of coal allotted out-of-turn by the Hon'ble Railway Minister during the following periods:

(1) from March 25, 1977 to July, 20, 1979;

(2) from July 21, 1979 to January 15, 1980;

(3) from January 16, 1980 to December 31, 1980; and

(4) from January, 1, 1981 to January 15, 1982?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (1) from March 25, 1977 to July 20, 1979—Nil.

(2) From July 21, 1979 to January 15, 1980—Nil.

(3) From January 16, 1980 to December 31, 1980—28 rakes and 125 wagons.

(4) From January 1, 1981 to January 15, 1982—278 rakes and 4363 wagons.

"Palace on Wheels"

403. SHRI DHULESHWAR
MEENA:

SHRI JASWANT SINGH;
SHRI YOGENDRA SHARMA;
SHRI M BASAVARAJU:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) The total expenditure incurred so far on the renovation of 'Palace on Wheels' and estimated expenditure to be incurred on its airconditioning and refurbishing;

(b) whether a trial run of this train was recently made, if so, the total expenditure involved therein, the places covered by it and the number of passengers travelled on its inaugural run and the improvements sought to be made therein in the lights of the various suggestions made so far.

(c) whether any survey of traffic potential has been made both domestic and foreign; if so, what are the details thereof; and

(d) whether any suggestion had been made to cut down its fare, if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) to (d) The