

Revision of the criterion of income for MIG Group flats

1086. SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING AND SUPPLY AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to revise the minimum income criterion from Rs. 7,202/- to Rs. 18,000/- and above in respect of allotment of MIG flats in view of the abnormal rise in the cost of MIG flats which has gone up from Rs. 26,000/- in 1970 to about Rs. 80,000/- at present;

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

(c) whether it is a fact that the Middle Income Group within the framework of the existing limits can illafford to pay Rs. 80,000/- which is beyond their means especially in case of Government servants; and

(d) if so, whether Government propose to permit those persons who have already registered in MIG category to opt for LIG flats?

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING AND SUPPLY AND REHABILITATION (SHRI SIKANDAR BAKHT): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Prices of M.I.G. flats built by different housing agencies vary from place to place in the country.

(d) No, Sir.

Wheat held in stock

1087. SHRI U. R. KRISHNAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the quantity of wheat presently in Government warehouses;

(b) what is the requirement of wheat in the country at present; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to utilise the wheat stocks

which are held in excess of the requirement in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI BHANU PRA-TAP SINGH): (a) About 12.8 million tonnes of wheat was in stock with the various public agencies as on 1st November, 1977.

(b) The requirements of wheat are elastic to a considerable extent, depending on the availability of wheat and other foodgrains and other sub-stitutable food stuffs, their comparative prices, levels of income, population, extent of urbanisation, local food habits, etc. In view of this, it is not possible to frame a precise estimate of overall requirements of wheat in the country.

(c) A number of measures have been initiated by the Government to increase the offtake of wheat through the public distribution system. The State Governments have *inter-alia* been asked to increase the quantum of foodgrains ration from 8 kgs. to 12 kgs. per adult per month the extra quantity being supplied in the form of wheat or whole-meal atta. The requirements of the State Governments for wheat are being met in full. Wheat is also being made available to the State Governments for gratuitous and other relief works in the flood/cyclone affected areas. The balanced quantity of about 1.5 million tonnes of Russian wheat loan is being repaid in kind, instead of cash as was decided earlier. It has also been agreed to supply 70,000 tonnes wheat flour (Maida) to Vietnam on loan basis to tide over their present short supply situation.

Blind persons in the country

1088. DR. V. P. DUTT: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of blind persons in the country at present and

the approximate number of persons suffering from various other eye ailments;

(b) whether the Prime Minister, speaking at a function at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, on the 28th October, 1977, is reported to have stated that voluntary effort would have to be made to assist Government programmes in combating the growing problem of blindness and other forms of visual impairment in the country; and

(c) if so, what are the details of the scheme Government have formulated in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV): (a) According to the latest I.C.M.R. studies, the number of blind persons in the country is about nine million. About 45 million are visually impaired (short of blindness). Their number ailment-wise is, however, not available. However, the most common causes for blindness are cataract, trachoma and infection, small-pox, injuries and nutritional deficiencies.

(b) Yes.

(c) The Government of India has launched the National Programme for Prevention of Visual Impairment and Control of Blindness. The important features of this programme are: (a) giving eye health education to the people, (b) providing temporary facilities through mobile units so as to reach the largest number of people in the shortest possible time, (c) to simultaneously establish a permanent infrastructure of eye health care at (i) Peri, pheral level i.e., PHC's and below (ii) Intermediate level i.e., Sub-division/ tehsil/taluqa and district hospitals (iii) Central level i.e., Medical Colleges Regional Institutes and National Institutes.

Under this programme it is proposed to offer financial assistance to voluntary agencies for organising eye

camps to provide comprehensive eye care to the community in the rural areas. The assistance is given at the rate of Rs. 40 per intra-ocular operation performed subject to a ceiling of Rs. 6000 per eye camp. Under the scheme of grants-in-aid financial assistance up to 100 per cent is given to voluntary institutions engaged in treatment of blindness for purchase of essential hospital equipment and for additional construction for the expansion of hospital facilities.

Controversial history text book

1089. DR. V. P. DUTT;

SHRI KALP NATH RAI:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION, SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a decision regarding the alleged controversial history books, namely, (i) Medieval India; (ii) Modern India; (iii) Freedom struggle; and (iv) Communalism and the Writing of Indian History;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and what are the details of the objectionable contents in those books;

(c) whether it is a fact that a panel of historians was appointed to examine the books;

(d) if so, what are the names of the persons on the panel; and

(e) what are the findings of the panel and what action Government propose to take thereon?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE (DR. PRATAP CHANDRA CHUN-DER): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Details of the objections raised in these books are attached. *See* Appendix CIII, Annexure No. 59). It is the manner of presentation of facts which has been mainly objected to.

(c) to (e). No, Sir. No panel of historians has been appointed to ex-