

producers and the Central Government for canalisation of 80 per cent of the tea produced during the current season through auction sales has failed;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND CO-OPERATION (SHRI MOHAN DHARIA): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

With a view to ensure that adequate quantities of tea are available for domestic consumption, tea producers were asked in the wake of rising prices early this year, to offer about 80 per cent of their produce at the auctions. As a result of this appeal, by the second week of November 1977 arrivals have totalled 225 Million Kgs. which is higher than last year's figure by about 33 Million Kgs.

As a consequence of Government's intervention and as a result of higher production auction prices have come down from a level of about Rs. 29.14 per kg. in April to Rs. 11.57 per kg. on 5th December.

By restricting exports to 225 M. Kgs. this year, it is estimated that there will be enough stock of tea available within the country to meet internal demand at steady prices. As such no further steps are required to be taken for the present.

Offer of financial help by Indians, living abroad for the Cochin airport

*732. SHRI SHRIKANT VERMA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indians living in Gulf countries have offered financial help to the Government of India for the construction of an international airport at Cochin; and

(b) if so, what action Government have taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PURUSHOTAM KAUSHIK): (a) and (b) Indians in the Gulf countries offered to raise funds to the extent of Rs. 8 crores approximately for construction of an international airport at Cochin, through debentures, lotteries and soft loans from the Gulf countries. However as Trivandrum is already being developed for operation of flights to the Gulf, Government have no proposal, at present, to develop Cochin for international flights.

Higher stock limits of pulses

*733. SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH:
SHRIMATI SARASWATI PRADHAN:
SHRIMATI SUSHILA SHANKAR ADIVAREKAR:
SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND CO-OPERATION be pleased to state the reasons for raising the maximum limit of stocks of pulses by wholesalers and retailers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND CO-OPERATION (SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR GOYAL): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

The Pulses and Edible Oils (Storage Control) Order 1977 was issued on 30th September, 1977 as part of a dehoarding operation. The ceiling limits were kept intentionally low uniformly, with a view to ensuring that stocks that might have been cornered are brought out in the open. In view of several representations received including from State Governments and also in view of the arrival of the kharif crops

in the market increasing the availability, the Government have amended the said Order providing for increased stock limits for certain populous areas and primary mandis. The maximum limit for other areas has generally been maintained. This has been done to ensure a smoother flow of stocks from the producer to the consumer.

Hoarding of edible oil stocks in railway wagons

*734. SHRIMATI SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have issued any instructions to the State Governments to seize all such stocks of edible oil as are lying with the Railways and are not being lifted by the traders, with a view to creating an artificial scarcity; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and to what extent the measure has brought relief to the consumers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR GOYAL): (a) Yes, Sir. After the Pulses and Edible Oils (Storage Control) Order, 1977 was issued on 30-9-1977 the State Governments were advised to initiate concerted action to ensure effective implementation of the provisions of the Order and check any attempts by the trade, to hold up stocks at various carriers including railway wagons and Railway Stations without taking delivery.

(b) Writ petitions were filed against this Order by several traders in the Supreme Court, who issued on 14-10-77 interim orders against the confiscation of the stocks in excess of limits prescribed therein. The provisions of this Order did not, therefore, have its proper impact. The Storage Control Order of 30-9-1977 has since been modified by an Order issued on 21-11-1977.

The State Governments, who are the executing agencies for the implementation of the provisions of the Essential Commodities Act, take appropriate action as necessary.

Changes in the policy of export of iron ore

†735. SHRI NABIN CHANDRA BURAGOHAIN:
SHRI PRASENJIT BARMAN:
SHRI N. P. CHAUDHARI:
SHRI GUNANAND THAKUR:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to make some changes in the policy in regard to the export of iron ore; and

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

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI MOHAN DHARIA): (a) and (b) There is no proposal at present under consideration of Government to make any change in the policy in regard to the export of iron ore, except that efforts would be directed towards diversifying the commodity mix so as to maximise domestic value added in this traditional export item.

Colombo Plan Consultative Committee

‡736. SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND:
SHRI BIRCHANDRA DEB BURMAN:
SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Colombo Plan Consultative Committee met at Kathmandu on the 29th November, 1977; and

†Previously Starred Question 531 transferred from the 9th December, 1977.

‡Previously Starred Question 676 transferred from the 16th December, 1977.