

Report of the Cabinet sub-committee on sugar policy

*649. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR SAHU:

SHRI PRAKASH MEHROTRA:

SHRIMATI HAMIDA HABI-BULLAH:

SHRI SAWAISINGH SISO-DIA:

SHRI BHIM RAJ:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to refer to the reply to Unstarred Question 724 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 26th July, 1978 and state:

(a) whether the Cabinet Sub-committee set up to revise the existing sugar policy and to recommend the policy for the year 1978-79 has submitted its report; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The report has been considered by the Government and the decisions taken thereon have already been announced on the floor of the House on 10th August, 1978. (A copy of the said statement is placed on the Table of the House).

Statement

Sir, the House may kindly recall my making a detailed policy statement at the beginning of the Budget Session, on February 27, 1978, setting out a number of measures decided upon by the Government to maximise the off-take of sugarcane by the various sweetening agents produced from sugarcane, namely, sugar, khandsari and gur and more particularly,

by the organized sector of the sugar industry. That these measures have considerably met our objective is seen from the single fact that sugar production during the current year, at about 65 lakh tonnes would represent an increase of over 34 per cent as compared to the last year's level of 48.4 lakh tonnes, which itself was a record till then. The sugar industry would be absorbing an additional quantum of sugarcane of the order of about 19 million tonnes during the current sugar year.

2. Taking into account the record sugar production, the high level of sugar stocks in the system, the preponderant need to further maximize domestic consumption of sugar which has already risen by over 22 per cent in the last one year, to bring the benefits of enlarged production to the consumer etc. the Government had taken up a review of the sugar policy. After carefully considering all aspects of the present situation in this sector, the Government have decided to remove the control on prices, movement and distribution of sugar with effect from August 16, 1978. To ensure a smooth transition, the organisations responsible for lifting levy sugar against release orders issued before that date are being asked to take over the stocks expeditiously.

3.1. The statutory minimum price payable for sugarcane for the season 1978-79 will be raised to Rs. 10 linked to 8.5 per cent recovery against the present level of Rs. 8.50 linked to 8.5 per cent recovery.

3.2. The present excise duty on levy and free sale sugar would be averaged out and imposed on sugar, simultaneously with the discontinuance of the dual pricing system.

3.3. To ensure that the sugar prices prevail at reasonable levels, a close watch would be kept on the production, availability and price. Government hope that the industry and trade would take this opportunity to stimulate domestic consump-

tion by maintaining prices at reasonable levels. In case prices tend to go beyond such levels, Government will not hesitate to take appropriate action.

4. There are some consequential steps needed under the changed circumstances including those relating to the relief to be provided to units which have created/expanded their capacity in recent times at high cost, for units which modernize their equipment etc. as also to provide incentives to sugar factories for early and late crushing. These are being worked out and appropriate decisions thereon would be taken in due course.

5. Government hope that the new policy will stimulate domestic consumption and also bring about a greater balance between the sugarcane availability and its utilization by the various sweetening agents. It is also hoped that the domestic consumption of sugar will increase further substantially, in tune with the increasing production.

Poor Homes in the Capital

*650. SHRI SITARAM KESRI:
SHRI DHARAMCHAND
JAIN:
SHRI RAMANAND YADAV:
SHRI BHISHMA NARAIN
SINGH:
SHRI BAPURAOJI MAROT-
RAOJI DESHMUKH:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that there are no facilities in the poor homes in the Capital to reform beggars living in these homes; and

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION,
SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE

(DR. PRATAP CHANDRA CHUNDER): (a) No, Sir, Facilities for vocational training are provided in the Homes for Beggars in Delhi, with a view to weaning them away from the habit of begging.

(b) Does not arise.

Thanwat Irrigation Project in Mandla district of Madhya Pradesh

*651. SHRI BALRAM DAS: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Madhya Pradesh Government submitted to the Central Government in October, 1976 the report of the Thanwat irrigation project in district Mandla in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) whether it is a fact that the comments of the Central Water Commission were sent in September, 1977;

(c) what steps the Central Government are taking to ensure that the irrigation projects submitted by the State Government are examined expeditiously;

(d) whether it is also a fact that the State Government furnished replies to the comments of the Central Water Commission in January, 1978; and

(e) what are the reasons for which the Central Government's approval has still not been conveyed to the State Government?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): (a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b). Yes, Sir.

(c) Guidelines have been issued to the State Governments for the