

distribution agencies at the time of the last increase of prices, and about subsequent ante-dated sales by those agencies to reap exorbitant profits.

(b) Does not arise.

Procurement drive in foodgrains in West Bengal

*449. SHRI KALYAN ROY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the procurement drive of foodgrains in West Bengal has totally failed;

(b) if so, what are the details of the procurement made in that State during the last six months;

(c) whether the Central Government propose to increase the supply of rice to West Bengal; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI ANNASHEB P. SHINDE): (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) and (b) While the procurement during the marketing season 1973-74 was lower than expected, it would be incorrect to say that the procurement drive in West Bengal had completely failed.

A major portion of the procurement is made in the earlier part of the marketing season and out of a total procurement of 1.59 lakh tonnes of rice 9,600 tonnes was procured during the last six months of the marketing season i.e. from May to October, 1974.

(c) and (d) The reasonable requirements of rice for the Public Distribution System in the State of West Bengal are being met from the Central

Pool, taking into consideration the overall availability of rice in the Central Pool, relative needs of other States, local market availability and other relevant factors.

Wide-spread incidence of Small Pox

*450. SHRI B. S. SHEKHAWAT:

SHRI S. A. HASHMI:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that on account of the widespread incidence of small pox in some parts of the country this year, thousands of persons have died and many more have become disabled or blind;

(b) if so, what is the number of casualties compared to those in the previous year; and

(c) what are the reasons for the spread of small pox and what precautionary measures were and are proposed to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING (DR. KARAN SINGH): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

14 States and all the Union Territories are now free from smallpox. In Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, Orissa and West Bengal, the number of active smallpox foci ranges from 1 to 5. Assam has 31 active foci while U. P. has 50 and Bihar has 251. According to the present trend of elimination of outbreaks, it should be possible to make the country free of smallpox sometime in 1975.

Earlier in the year, the high incidence of smallpox was mainly due to intensive case search carried out throughout the country to unearth

undetected cases and also due to accumulated backlog of primary vaccinations. From 1st January, 1974 to 16th November, 1974, 1,86,363 cases with 30965 deaths have been reported in the country as against 88,110 cases with 15,434 deaths during the year 1973.

The Intensive Smallpox Eradication Campaign was launched in the whole country with main emphasis on the States of U. P., Bihar, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh from where high incidence of the disease was reported. The objective of the campaign was to undertake active search of smallpox cases followed by containment of the outbreaks. Under this Intensive Campaign, the State Governments who are primarily responsible for the implementation of the Programme have mobilised adequate number of health personnel and transport for case search and disease containment operations. The Central Government have taken prompt measures to assist the State health authorities to meet the situation. The number of Surveillance Teams headed by Senior Epidemiologists (National or International) has been increased so far to 105 from 22 and Containment Teams to 141 as against 15 working last year in addition to the normal staff of the Smallpox Eradication Programme. During the year, 184 four-wheel drive vehicles and 150 motor cycles have been provided to the teams to ensure their mobility. Further, adequate quantities of vaccine, bifurcated needles and health education materials have been supplied and sufficient quantities have been kept in reserve. The vehicles and the motor cycles have been supplied by the World Health Organisation which is also meeting their POL and other expenditure connected with the Campaign.

To ensure that all the hidden and lingering foci of smallpox are discovered promptly, besides periodical active case search operations, secondary surveillance systems like getting in-

formation about smallpox cases from community leaders, teachers, revenue staff and other social workers etc., a cash reward of Rs. 100/- has also been instituted for reporting a previously unrecorded outbreak of smallpox.

NPLs' new devices for Family Planning

*451. SHRIMATI SUSHILA SHANKAR ADIVAREKAR:

SHRIMATI SUMITRA G. KULKARNI:

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether some new devices have been developed by the National Physical Laboratory for application in the family planning programme; and

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

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING (DR. KARAN SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

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

Statement

Ovulation in women occurs normally about 14-15 days before the on-set of the next menstrual period. At the time of the ovulation, there is slight rise in the body temperature. The device developed by National Physical Laboratory helps in detecting this rise in body temperature. The device contains some organic material which does not change directly from the solid phase to the liquid phase on heating but passes through an intermediate phase which is called a liquid crystal phase of the material. For detecting the body temperature this liquid crystal thermal device (in the form of film) is put in contact with any part of the body such as on the forehead.