

740. SHRI K. SUNDARAM: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether sugar prices are proposed to be further increased;

(b) if so, to what extent; and

(c) the factors necessitating this increase in prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHAB SHINDE): (a) to (c) The present ex-factory prices of sugar for factories in different regions are based on the recovery and duration estimated for the season 1966-67 at the time of fixation of these prices. There require revision in the light of the working results obtained during the season. This matter is under consideration.

SCARCITY OF CEREALS ETC IN NICOBAR ISLANDS

741. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is acute scarcity of cereals and edible oils in Nicobar Islands; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have so far taken to meet the scarcity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHAB SHINDE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

742. SHRI SURJIT SINGH ATWAL: SHRI V. V. RAMASWAMY:

Will the Minister of LAW be pleased to state:

(a) the number of election petitions received from the States of Punjab, Haryana and Madras after the recent General Elections;

(b) the time limit fixed for the disposal of these petitions?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW (SHRI D. R. CHAVAN): (a) Under the Representation of the People Act, 1951 as amended by the Representation of the People (Amendment) Act, 1966, all election petitions have to be filed before the High Court or the Judicial Commissioner's Court of the State or Union Territory concerned. According to the information furnished by the Registrars of High Courts the number of election petitions filed before the respective High Courts in respect of Punjab, Haryana and Madras is 20, 17 and 10 respectively.

(b) Apart from sub-section (7) of Section 86 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, which provides that the High Courts shall endeavour to conclude the trial of the petitions within 6 months from the date of presentation of the petition, no time limit has been fixed or can be fixed for the disposal of these election petitions.

RICE STOCK IN PUNJAB

743. SHRI SURJIT SINGH ATWAL: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Punjab has huge stock of unsold rice;

(b) whether the traders have asked for permission to sell it to Government of Himachal Pradesh; and