

Uniforms Committee is still under consideration of the Director General of Civil Aviation.

The recommendations of the Stores Committee involve major changes in the existing pay structure and recruitment policy in respect of various posts, a detailed examination of which is necessary in consultation with other Ministries concerned.

RATE OF INTEREST ON LOANS GIVEN TO AGRICULTURISTS

146. SHRI T. V. ANANDAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any move on the part of the Ministry to reduce the rate of interest charged by Cooperatives on loans granted to agriculturists; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI B. S. MURTHY): (a) and (b) While communicating decisions on the recommendations of the Committee on Taccavi Loans and Cooperative Credit, the Government of India suggested to the State governments in September, 1963 that the rates of interest charged by cooperatives should be realistic depending on the money market and other factors and should generally be kept below 8 per cent and should be periodically reviewed. The recent increase in bank rate will have repercussions on the interest rates charged by cooperatives. The Reserve Bank is also carrying on certain studies on the question of appropriateness of margins retained by the credit structure at different levels. In the light of these studies State governments will take steps to review their interest rates taking into account conditions in the money market and other local factors.

CONTRACT GIVEN FOR CLEARANCE OF FOODGRAINS AT BOMBAY PORT

146. SHRI P. ABRAHAM: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in April 1962 the Food Ministry appointed any contractor for the clearance of the food-grains at Bombay Port;

(b) if so, to whom this contract was awarded; and

(c) whether it is a fact that Government have lost about Rs. 57 lakhs due to this contract?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI D. R. CHAVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) M/s P. T. Anklesaria & Co., Bombay.

(c) No Sir. The contract was awarded to the lowest tenderer.

IMPORT OF RICE

147. SHRI P. ABRAHAM: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have entered into an agreement with foreign countries for supply of rice to India; and

(b) if so, how much quantity has been imported from different countries so far?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI D. R. CHAVAN): (a) Yes, Sir. Apart from imports of rice from U.S.A. under P.L. 480, agreements have been entered into with Burma, Pakistan, U.A.R., Thailand and Cambodia for the purchase of rice.