WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Increasing MSP for paddy and relief package for sugar industry

*46. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Government has worked out a plan to increase the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for paddy and a relief package for the beleaguered sugar industry to help tackle farm distress, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the extent to which the MSP for paddy would be increased?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH): (a) and (b) The Minimum Support Price (MSP) of paddy (common) for 2015-16 has been increased by ₹ 50 per quintal over its MSP for 2014-15 and fixed at ₹ 1410 per quintal. The MSP of paddy Grade A has also been raised by ₹ 50 per quintal over its MSP for 2014-15 and fixed at ₹ 1450 per quintal.

Department of Food and Public Distribution has notified a scheme on 23.06.2015 envisaging soft loan worth ₹ 6000 crore to sugar mills to facilitate clearance of cane price arrears of current sugar season 2014-15 relating to the Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) for the season fixed by the Central Government. The Scheme provides for Government to bear the interest subvention of ₹ 600 crore during moratorium period of one year.

In addition, Central Government scheme notified on 28.02.2014, allowing the incentive for marketing and promotion services of raw sugar production targeted for export during sugar season 2013-14 has been extended to sugar season 2014-15. The incentive amount can be used for clearance of cane price dues of cane growers.

Tatkal Special Train Service

*47. DR. CHANDAN MITRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to launch Tatkal Special Train Service;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof along with the routes identified for the purpose; and

(c) by when the new service is likely to be operational?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) and (b) Instructions have been issued for running of special trains having separate fare