

Litigation in Karnataka High Court has resulted in an order dated 12.11.2002 which stops the Government from implementing the price control regime of the Pharmaceutical Policy-2002. Government have filed a Special Leave Petition in the Supreme Court against the order of the Karnataka High Court.

Pension to Women Affected by Bhopal Gas Tragedy

†1740. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any demand has been made by the women affected by Bhopal gas tragedy to increase the amount of pension being given at present to them; and

(b) if so, the number of such women together with the existing amount of pension and the decision Government have taken or contemplating to take on their demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI CHHATRAPAL SINGH): (a) According to information received from the State Government of Madhya Pradesh, no such demand has been received.

(b) In view of (a) above, the question does not arise.

VSS In Durgapur Unit of HFCL

1741. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether as per AAIFR's order revival of Durgapur unit of HFCL was to be reconsidered by BIFR;

(b) whether before the hearing of BIFR, almost all the employees of the unit were released on Voluntary Separation Scheme (VSS);

(c) if so, the reason therefor;

(d) when were the release orders actually issued to the individual employees; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(e) payments made so far to the employees against their terminal dues?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI CHHATRAPAL SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Out of 1206 employees, 1188 have opted for Voluntary Separation Scheme (VSS) and have been relieved till 4.2.2003. BIFR has not scheduled any hearing so far.

(c) Acceptance of VSS of such employees who have opted for VSS will enable management to make payment of terminal dues to the relieved employees as per the scheme of VSS.

(d) The release orders were issued in a phased manner from 27.11.2002 to 4.2.2003.

(e) As on 4.3.2003, a total of Rs. 15.99 crore has been paid to the workers towards various terminal dues like ex-gratia, gratuity, etc.

VSS in Haldia

1742. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some employees of Haldia, FP&ARD and Marketing of HFC were released on VSS (Voluntary Separation Scheme) with retrospective effect from 6th January, 2003 though the release orders were issued to the employees concerned on 12th January, 2003 onwards;

(b) if so, whether denial of wages for the period from 6th January onward till the date of actual release is not a violation of existing labour laws including Payment of Wages Act;

(c) if not, the reason therefor; and

(d) if yes, action taken to pay the wages for the above period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI CHHATRAPAL SINGH): (a) to (d) Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Limited (HFC) has released 899 employees of Haldia Unit. 495 employees of FP&ARD and 160 employees of Marketing Divisions of HFC w.e.f 6th January, 2003. The employees do not stand to