

Govt hikes sugarcane prices by ₹20 to ₹275 per quintal

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NEW DELHI: The Cabinet Wednesday hiked the minimum price at which sugar mills buy cane from the farmers by ₹20 per quintal to ₹275 per quintal (100kg) for the next marketing year starting October, Union law and information technology minister Ravi Shankar Prasad has said.

The 'fair and remunerative price' (FRP) is linked to a basic recovery rate of 10%. In sugar industry jargon, recovery rate is the amount of sugar that can be extracted from a given quantity of cane, usually a quintal.

The government will also offer a premium of ₹2.75 per quintal for each 0.1% increase in the recovery beyond 10%.

An official statement said the cost of production of sugarcane for 2018-19 is pegged at ₹155/quintal and the FRP of ₹275 per quintal at a recovery rate of 10% is 77.42% over the production cost. This will ensure growers get more than 50% returns over the costs, the statement added.

While the government offers minimum support prices for 24 crops, in the case of sugarcane, it fixes the FRP, which is a guaranteed price. State governments usually add their own bonus pri-

ces over and above the FRP.

Millers have been suffering losses due to surplus output, leading to piling sugarcane arrears or money that the sugar mills owe to the farmers, which stands at nearly ₹22,000 crore.

PROPOSAL TO EXPEDITE ADOPTION CLEARED

In a move that will expedite adoption cases, the Union cabinet on Wednesday approved the proposal to amend the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, which will empower district magistrates to give the final approval before a child is adopted.

On the proposed amendment to the JJ act, 2015, Prasad said it will allow courts of district magistrate to pass adoption order.

At present, prospective adoptive parents have to go to civil or family courts to get the final go-ahead after completing all formalities related to adoption.

A senior official of women and child development ministry said the move to empower DMs will bring down the time to approve adoption cases to two months.

DEATH TO CONVICTS FOR RAPE OF UNDER-12 GIRLS

The cabinet cleared the bill that replacing the ordinance promul-

gated on April 21 awarding death penalty to those convicted of raping girls aged under 12. The bill to replace the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance, 2018 will be introduced during the monsoon session. The ordinance was promulgated in the aftermath of the rape of a minor girl in Kathua in Jammu and Kashmir.

The WCD ministry is now planning to move the cabinet seeking the same punishment for those guilty of sexually abusing young boys of the same age, two senior government officials familiar with the matter said.

AMNESTY SCHEME FOR CONVICTED PRISONERS

The government has announced an amnesty scheme for convicted prisoners to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

A government statement said those eligible for remission will include women/transgender convicts aged 55 and above who have completed half of their sentence period; male aged 60 and above who have completed half of their sentence period; differently-abled with 70% disability and above with half of their sentence period completed; and terminally ill and those with two-third of their sentence finished.