

instrumental. These Awards known as "Akademi Awards" correspond to "Sahitya Akademi Annual Awards" given by Sahitya Akademi for excellence in literature in the different Indian languages. Both these Awards, instituted since 1955, confer all India recognition to the recipients. There is no proposal to rename these Awards.

Pollution due to Fertilizers, Pesticides and Herbicides

3386. SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that due to the increasing use of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides to boost agricultural production, the problem of pollution of water and food in rural area of the country is attaining dangerous proportion; and

(b) the steps Government has contemplated in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI VIR SEN) : (a) Reports have been received that in some areas indiscriminate use of pesticides and herbicides resulted in pollution of water and food. However, so far no report of pollution of soil/ground water due to the use of fertilizers has been received.

(b) Environmental safety from toxic effects of pesticides is ensured by registering all the insecticides (meant for import, manufacture, sale or use in the country) under the Insecticide Act, 1968. The Registration Committee constituted under the Act grants registration only after satisfying itself that the chemical is safe to man, animals and environment in general. Since some environmental effects are observed after several years of use, a Pesticide Environment Pollution Advisory Committee has been constituted under the Insecticide Act, which continues to review the pollution status from time to time. As a result, some insecticides

have been banned in the country and use of some has been restricted. Recently a Committee has been constituted by the Ministry of Agriculture to review the use of some persistent insecticides in the light of new alternatives or approaches available.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research and the Department of Environment have initiated programmes to assess residues of various pesticides in food, fodder, water, vegetables, water, etc. Various scientific organisations like ICAR, CSIR, agricultural and non-agricultural universities, Department of Science and Technology and the Department of Environment are engaged in developing safer approaches or alternatives to persistent pesticides.

Central Law for Settlement in Forest Land in Kerala

3387. SHRI K. MOHANDAS : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased state :

(a) whether Government of Kerala faced problems in giving due recognition to the legitimate interests of the settlers in some parts of the forest lands in Kerala due to the Central laws;

(b) whether it was brought to the notice of the Union Government; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Union Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI VIR SEN) : (a) to (c) No Central Law has been made for settlement of individuals in the forest areas of Kerala. Under the provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, prior approval of the Central Government is necessary before any State Government passes an order for diverting forest land to non-forest use. No case from Kerala involving settlement in forest land is pending with the Central Government.