

headquarters and these have telephonic links with their respective sub-divisional headquarters.

(e) there is no proposal at present to provide STD facility to these stations.

Utilisation of Agricultural Machinery in Punjab

5505. S. ATINDER PAL SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount invested on agricultural machinery in Punjab;

(b) the amount of loans taken by farmers from private sector and nationalised and other banks for this propose;

(c) how does the amount spent on agricultural machinery compare with the amount invested in industries;

(d) the average income of farmers in Punjab as compared to the national average;

(e) whether there is optimum utilisation of agricultural machinery installed in Punjab; and

(f) if not, the steps taken by Government for proper utilisation of agricultural machinery in Punjab?

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI DEVI LAL): (a) According to the current estimates of the Government of Punjab, the investment on agricultural machinery is of the order of Rupees four thousand crores.

(b) No estimates are available for loans from private sector. However an amount of Rupees three hundred and seventy three crores from institutional sources is estimated

to have been disbursed during 1989-90.

(c) The amount spent on agricultural machinery is comparatively higher than investment made in the industry as per the estimates of the Government of Punjab.

(d) the average income of farmers in either Punjab or at all India level is not separately estimated by the Government.

(e) and (f). Extent of utilization of agricultural machinery varies from farmer to farmer. The State Government is providing advice to farmers on optimum utilisation of agricultural machinery.

[English]

Bottlenecks hampering the Growth of Fertilizer Industry

5506. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have identified the bottlenecks which have hampered the growth of the fertilizer industry;

(b) if so, the factors responsible for the slow progress of fertilizer units; and

(c) the steps taken to remove those bottlenecks and immediate implementation of the package recommended by the Eighth Plan working group on fertilizers?

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI DEVI LAL): (a) to (c) There has been a steady increase in the production capacity of both nitrogenous and phosphatic fertilizers. In the decade 1980-90 production capacity of Nitrogen increased from 4.575 million tonnes to 8.148 million tonnes and of phosphates from 1.332 million tonnes to 2.75 million tonnes. Although there are no major bottle-

necks in the growth of the fertilizer industry, Fertilizer Association of India has represented against the longer depreciation period and higher capacity utilisation norms under the retention price and subsidy scheme. An Expert Group has been constituted by the Planning Commission to go into the entire gamut of fertilizer subsidy, pricing etc.

Closure of Coal Based Fertilizer Project of FCI at Korba.

5507. SHRI DILIP SING JU DEO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Fertilizer Corporation of India has finally decided to wind up their coal-based fertilizer project at Korba in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, the technical and financial constraints that led the FCI to take this step;

(c) the total expenditure incurred on this project so far;

(d) the steps taken to utilise the machinery of this plant and other infrastructure built for it; and

(e) the number of person likely to be rendered jobless as a result of this winding up and steps proposed by FCI to absorb them?

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI DEVI LAL): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. It has been decided to wind up the coal based fertilizer plant at Korba mainly due to the fact that the coal gasification technology at Ramagundam and Talcher has not stabilised and these plants are showing poor capacity utilisation. Implementation of the Korba Project was held in abeyance due to financial constraints. Further, most of the requirements of

nitrogenous fertilizers in Madhya Pradesh are being met from the new gas based plant of National Fertilizers Ltd., at Vijapur in District Guna. It has also been found that coal gasification technology at present is costlier than production of nitrogenous fertilizers with natural gas as feedstocks.

(c) The total expenditure on the project upto January, 1990 is Rs. 1840 lakhs approximately.

(d) and (e). The equipment of this project is proposed to be utilised in the other two coal based plants to the extent possible. Other infrastructure like land, stores, railway siding is proposed to be disposed of in consultation with the State Government. At present 76 employees including 11 officers are working there. Efforts will be made to get them absorbed in other public sector undertakings. In case, it is not possible, they will be transferred to other units of FCI.

Milk Production

5508. SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken steps to boost milk production in different States and Union Territories;

(b) if so, the specific steps taken to increase milk production in Orissa during the Seventh Plan;

(c) whether Government have a proposal to introduce some new schemes to boost milk production in that State during Eighth Plan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI DEVI LAL): (a) Yes, Sir.