

MR. SPEAKER: Please don't interrupt. No please.

SHRI KAMAL NATH: This is a matter which we have initiated. This is not something which is being promoted. This is something which we are considering and we are taking action on it. Its origin is of last one or two years only. This is not an on-going thing. The hon. Member is saying that this is our policy. It is certainly not the policy of this Government to promote production of banned products. When they were going into manufacture, it was not known that it was banned. *(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

MR. SPEAKER: Why are you interrupting. He is giving a good reply.

*(Interruptions)*

*[English]*

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Now that these things have come to our notice, we are initiating action. It is certainly not our policy to encourage units to manufacture certain products which are banned in other countries. Nor are we going to allow India to be used as a base for the manufacture of such hazardous and toxic materials.

SHRI MUMTAZ ANSARI: In the year 1988, one accident took place in Jamshedpur and it caused a lot of injuries to about 103 persons. The hon. Minister has stated that there is a provision under the Factories Act, 1948 that the inspecting staff should pay a visit to all the accident-prone areas.

I would like to ask one important question from the hon. Minister. How many times such type of visits were paid by the inspecting staff to Jamshedpur? Why concentration of hazardous industries has taken place in and around Jamshedpur and what steps have been taken to prevent all these things because such concentration is taking place without the promission of the Environment Ministry?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Sir, I cannot give the number of visits that were paid but I will sent hon. Member the information with regard to the steps being taken in Jamshedpur.

*[Translation]*

### Potato Crop

\*383. SHRI CHINMAYANAND SWAMI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the major diseases from which the potato crop is generally affected;

(b) whether such diseases had substantially affected the potato crop in 1991-92;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to protect the potato crop from these diseases; and

(e) the other steps taken to meet the growing demand for potatoes?

*[English]*

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) Late blight, Early blight and virus diseases.

(b) and (c). No, Sir.

(d) The following major steps are recommended/taken to protect the potato crop from these diseases:-

i) encouraging use of disease resistant varieties; and

ii) promoting usage of neet based fungicide spraying.

(e) i) Augmentation of supply and distribution of certified seeds.

- ii) Promotion of disease resistant varieties.
- iii) Promotion of seed Plot Technique for the production of disease free seeds in the plains.
- iv) Establishment of rapid multiplication units to provide quality planting material.
- v) Setting up of demonstration plots to promote modern production technology.
- vi) Development of TPS (True Potato Seed) Technology.

MR. SPEAKER: The main question is on patatocs. Let there not be any supplementaries on tomaotoes.

[Transiation]

SHRI CHINMAYANAND SWAMI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has, instead of giving direct reply to my questions, tried to evade it. I would like to know whether the production during the year 1991-92 was more as compered to the production during the year 1990-91. If the production during the year 1990-91 was more and it came down later, then certainly it was so due to the various diseases and I would therefore, like the hon. Minister to clarify whether the production during 1991-92 increased or decreased as composed to the production during the year 1990-91.

[English]

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: In the year 1990-91 the production was 15.25 million tonnes. During 1991-92 the production had increased to 15.7 million tonnes. That means there was an increase of .45 million tonnes. And, it is estimated that during the current financial year there will be another .5 million

tonnes increase which will make the total production to 16 million tonnes.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: It is clear by his reply that the rate of increase has come down.

SHRI CHINMAYANAND SWAMI: Our colleague Nitishji has rightly said that the rate of increase has come down, but it is not being accepted in the reply. Potato is a cash-crop and is the main source of income of the farmers after sugar-cane; the farmers, particularly of hill-areas do not have any other source of income. Now, since the rate of production of potato is coming down, I would, in such a situation, like to know the location of the centres which are responsible to implement disease control measures. A mention has been made regarding the Rapid Multiplication units, now I would like to know the location and exact number of such units and I would also like to know the number of units set up in plains and hill-areas separately. Will the Government contemplate or has it been contemplating to set up porto research institutes on the pattern of Sugar-Cane Research Institutes in order to increase the production of potato and also to control the diseases affecting the potato?

[English]

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: In the main answer we have given various steps taken by the Government to control the diseases affecting potato crop and thus resulting in loss of production. The disease control measures relate to development of disease resistant varieties, production of breeder seed, etc. In addition we have developed one new technique called as the Seed Plot Technique. Using this technology, the farmers are producing their own seeds in the plains.

Nearly 2,000 tonnes of breeder seed are now being produced annually for distribution. An alternative technology called the True Potato seeds has also been developed

and these are being propagated in Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and North-Eastern States. So, these are the various initiatives being taken.

In addition, we are establishing Rapid Multiplication Units, training of farmers, distribution of seeds etc. Therefore, these are the series of steps being taken for covering a very wide spectrum of activities of improve production of potato crop. (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR): Mr. Speaker, Sir the most commendable work has been done in the field of potato production. There has been 10 times increase in its production. You can imagine the increase of production of potato from the fact that the per capita availability of potato and increased from 4 kilogram to 18 kilogram.

PROF. PREM DHUMAL: The production has not increased by ten times? How are you calculating?

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: This is important. I am telling you about our achievements.....

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: Why did you yourself stop eating potato? You never refer the file to the hon. State Minister, you should at least let him make a reply.....

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: I am trying to inform you about the achievements of our farmers. Our country has produced 16 metric tonne of potato. In foreign countries it is included in the total production of food.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Regarding the price of potato.....

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: I do accept your point and this is why I consider it to be most important. It has been reported that the production of potato has declined during the current year. Potato was sown in larger area this time, even then there has been a loss

this year but it was not so last year. The production came down in December and consequently we had to suffer a great loss. You are right that there has been a decrease of 2 lakh 3 thousand tonne in the production. Production fell down although the area under potato cultivation was larger. But now the arrangements to ensure increase in production are being made. The most important thing is that the achievement can be greater of proper arrangement in this regard is made. The farmers can earn more money. We have 69 lakh tonne storage capacity in our country. Arrangement for true potato seed is being made. The Government is therefore, contemplating to set up a separate factory for this purpose. We are thinking to set up a cold-storage and to manufacture the powder so that its processing may be ensured. Other arrangements are also being made. So far as the price of potato is concerned, efforts are being made so that the NEFED and other agencies may purchase it and the farmers may be able to get remunerative price for their produce and also be encouraged to produce more.

[*English*]

SHRI PETER G. MARBANIANG: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the North-Eastern region, especially in Meghalaya, we find the potato is grown in the hilly parts of that area. In Meghalaya 60 per cent of the income of the farmers come from POT-CO potato. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Do you realise that you are disturbing the Members as well as others also.

SHRI PETER G. MARBANIANG: Recently we have seen the production has gone down considerably. I congratulate the Government for the steps which they have listed out here. How to help? However, I want to know whether these steps- see answer (d) and (e) which the Government has mentioned here will be implemented. Who will implement these steps- the ICAR or the State Government or any other agency to help the poor potato growers?

In Meghalaya, none of these steps has been taken to see that they are utilised.

**SHRI S KRISHNA KUMAR:** As the hon. Member is aware, agriculture is a State Subject; Basically, it is the responsibility of the State Government. But for integrated pesticide management specifically to the disease of potatoes definitely there is a nodal agency; it is the Pesticide Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, through the Pesticide Division of the State, of course, ICAR will be implementing the research projects; and the benefits of the research are again propagated to the fields through. The State Government and various other institutions.

**SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE:** Potato crop doubtlessly in certain areas, is being hit by pests. But there are a large number of areas, which are not in the pains particularly, which are not being hit by pests.

But this year, potato prices have gone down so much. In west Bengal, at one time, they have gone down upto Rs.82 per quintal. We have been constantly representing to the Minister of Commerce for exporting potatoes to Bangladesh, which is quite possible. But, unfortunately, nothing has been done as yet. I myself met him at least four times. Industrial alcohol can be produced from them. There are so many other ways of helping the potato growers. I would like to seek the help and protection of the Minister himself he should take it up with the Central Minister concerned.

**SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR:** I agree completely with Geetaji. The prices come down when there is a glut, more production. This is the bane of the farmers; when they produce more, they get hurt; when they produce less, they also get hurt. We have to see how much we have to produce.

West bengal is pest affected area. It is quarantine problem. We cannot take it out, because it will spread the disease throughout the country. But, now, I have got information that 80 per cent of the disease

has been contained. We have given new seeds of disease resistance varieties. We will take care. But I am also trying that my farmers should get more. We will take steps, as I said, like cold storage and changing the into powder.

**SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE:** There are absolutely disease free potatoes.

**SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR:** We can export them when they are disease free; we cannot export potatoes which are full of disease.

**SHRIMATI DIL KUMARI BHANDARI:** A large number of people in the hill areas have to depend for their sustenance on the potato cultivation. Due to less availability of land and greater input that is required in the areas, people in my State have to go for high value, low value production; and they find it profitable to produce seed potatoes; but even seed potatoes are not left out with diseases. Is there any plan or programme for research and development to control such diseases and thereby enhance production of potato; if so, whether the hon. Minister can think of establishing one such centre in the hill area?

**SHRI S KRISHNA KUMAR:** The results of the Government of India's efforts which are also spread over the hill areas can be seen in the hill areas such as Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipura, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Sikkim. The potato production has steadily increased over the last two or three years in all these states. Now the potato is a crop which requires a certain temperature range which is available in the hill areas. The pest control measures, the disease control measures in the hill areas are the same as in the other areas of the country. We have explained in the main answer, what those steps are. I do not want to detail it further. For every type of disease whether late blight or various pests, various disease control regimes are being implemented in the hill areas.

[*Translation*]

SHRI KESHRI LAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, from the hon. Minister I would like to know the number of cold-storage set up by the Government where the potato purchased from the farmers could be stored. The second point which I would like to know is, whether the Government would set up some research centres tehsil-wise so that potato-plants being affected by 'Jhulsa' disease in those places may be saved and potato of better quality are produced.

[*English*]

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: The total availability of cold storage facilities for the potato crop alone is 69 lakh tonnes as against the production of 145 lakh tonnes or so which represents 40 per cent. Now the provision of storage facilities for agricultural products and crops is a general question, and various facilities are being given by the Government. Incentives are being given by the Government through the NCDC, through various warehousing corporations and so on. Now a particular additional advantage has been given. Irradiated potato, which is disease free, can be stored in ordinary warehouses. That is an additional advantage recently to the green potato farmers.

Increasing the storage capacity, of course, is an on going process.

SHRI S.B. SIDNAL: The potato crop is a very sensitive crop and perishable too. Of late the pesticides which are used for preventing the disease have been totally ineffective. Whether the Government has taken note of these things because the input is costly plus ineffective? Whether these things have to be testified? Government has to take very serious action against those who sell fake pesticides.

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: I can read out the approved pesticides and insecticides which are used to control the various diseases of potato. As the hon. Member is aware the production of these pesticides is

under a particular Act. Registration is given, quality control is enforced by the Pesticide Department of the Union Ministry and the relevant Departments of the concerned States. If there is any particular complaint about the effectiveness of pesticides or insecticides, we can always look into it.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is something much more to that. It is the State Government on which farmers depend for pest control and I have been trying to contact the States to see that effective steps are taken and also to ensure that the supply of pesticides is made available. I had a very bad experience last year when this late blight occurred in U.P. It was very badly affected because the clearance was not done by the State cooperatives due to the areas problem and state Government was responsible for not allowing those insecticides to be delivered to them. They failed in their duty. That is what I want to say that we have to make the States realise that they must be responsible and they should realise their responsibility to make available these pesticides in time to them.

[*Translation*]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjharpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the matter is not merely concerned with the hill-areas, thousands of tonnes of potato is wasted every year as they are adversely affected by some or the other disease. The main reason of it is the non-availability of cold-storage at the block level. The Government has so far been able to provide storage capacity to same only 40 percent of potato production which is not enough. I would, therefore, like to know from the Government whether it proposes to provide cold-storage facility at every block-level?

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, that is what I am emphasising that efforts are on to make proper arrangement in this regard. Care is being taken to increase the number of Cold-Storage and processing of potato is also under consideration.

[English]

It should be processed in the shape of powder, or whatever it is

## WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTION

(Translation)

**Protection to Endangered Birds**

\*384 DR. PARSHURAM GANG-  
WAR:  
SHRI SANAT KUMAR  
MANDAL:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) The number of cases of killing endangered species of birds reported during 1991 and 1992;

(b) the steps taken by the Government to check the same;

(c) whether the Government proposes to set up an International Council for Birds Protection; and

(d) if so, the broad features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) to (d). The Chief Wildlife Wardens in the States have the overall responsibility of preventing hunting of birds included in the schedules of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972. At ground level the power is delegated to Wildlife Wardens and Divisional Officers and therefore there is no reporting of these cases to the Central Government.

Measures, administrative and legal, taken to provide protection to all schedules birds include:

1. Coverage of all endangered species of birds under the Scheduled of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972. Hunting of Scheduled birds has been completely banned by law.
2. Creation of sanctuaries for birds: Out of 496 National Parks/Sanctuaries 56 are managed mainly for the conservation of Birds and Financial assistance is provided by the Central Government for development of these National Parks/Sanctuaries on the request from the State Governments.
3. Raids carried out by the Wildlife authorities to curb illegal trading in birds reaches them.
4. Securing cooperation of Police, Coast Guard and Army in apprehending the poachers and illegal traders.
5. Adherence to CITES Provisions: International trade in endangered species of birds is regulated under the provisions of the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

There are international organisations like the International Union for Conservation of Nature which secure international cooperation/coordination for *inter alia* conservation of birds. No separate council for bird protection is envisaged at present.

**Operation Flood-II**

\*385. SHRI TEJ NARAYAN  
SINGH:  
SHRIMATI SHEELA  
GAUTAM:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state: