

*[English]***Aravalli Range**

*418. SHRI AVTAR SINGH
BHADANA:
SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA
RAJE:

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

(a) whether the Government have made any study of the total degraded forest in Aravalli range;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the schemes being launched by the Government to improve the environment and develop the forest in Aravalli range;

(d) the amount of Central as well as foreign assistance provided during each of the last three years for the purpose;

(e) the achievements made so far; and

(f) the scheme proposed to be launched in the near future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) to (f). Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Multi-State Co-operatives

*419. SHRI R. SURENDER REDDY:
Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to amend the Multi-State Co-operative Societies Act, 1984 to give company status to multi-State Co-operatives;

(b) if so, the details of the structural and other amendments proposed to be made;

(c) the objectives to be achieved thereby;

(d) whether the Government have ascertained the views of the premier cooperatives, experts on cooperatives, Department of Company Affairs and other concerned in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR): (a) to (e). Government have received some suggestions for making provisions for conversion of Multi-State Cooperative Societies into Multi-State Cooperative Companies. The suggestions have been made to enable the Multi-State Cooperative Societies to compete at par with other economic enterprises in the liberalised economic environment. All aspects and details of the proposals are being examined in consultation with the concerned Ministries and Departments of Government of India and the related organisations.

Indian Council of Agricultural Research

*420. SHRI SANDIPAN BHAGWAN THORAT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have plans to revamp ICAR on the basis of

a critical review recently undertaken to meet the challenges thrown by GATT;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have called a meeting of Heads of all the Agricultural Universities to identify regional problems hampering agricultural production, if so, the details of measures taken in this regard; and

(d) the main research projects under the Ministry for which international financial and technical cooperation is available and progress made thereunder?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR): (a) and (b). The working of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has been reviewed from time to time and the ICAR is fully geared to meet the challenges of agriculture in the modern world marked by agreement on the World Trade Organisation/GATT. An indicator of the success of ICAR is the contribution of agricultural research and education to the record food grains production and record stocks of food grains with the public agencies.

(c) Through the mechanism of ICAR Regional Committees for eight broad agro-climatic regions, meetings have been held for all the eight regions in which the State Agriculture Ministers, Secretaries to the State Governments, in charge of Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries, Vice Chancellors of all Agricultural Universities and Directors of ICAR Institutes in the region have been invited to participate. A number of recommendations have emerged from these high level meetings and a Status Report on the Centre State Coordination in the region has been brought out.

(d) The main Research Projects under the ICAR for which international financial and technical cooperation is available are as under :—

- (i) National Agricultural Research Project (NARP), Phase II with funding from World Bank to the tune of Rs. 135 crores for the VIII Plan.
- (ii) National Seed Project with the assistance from World Bank.
- (iii) 64 Research Projects in the field of Agricultural Research and Educational financed under United States India Fund to the tune of Rs. 11.66 crores.

The National Agricultural Research Project is designed to upgrade and strengthen the regional research capabilities of the State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) for conducting location specific, production oriented research in the 120 agro-climatic zones in the country. The emphasis on strengthening of research during Phase I of NARP was on foodgrains, cereals, pulses and oilseeds under rainfed conditions. During Phase II, the scope of the Project has been widened to cover horticulture and commercial field crops, agro-forestry, animal nutrition and animal drawn farm implements. The National Seed Project has been designed to meet the requirement of Breeder and Foundation Seed Production in the country. The NSP has produced 17,000 qtls of Breeder and Foundation Seed which exceeded the requisition made by various States during 1993-94.

Sports Authority of India

3950. MAJ. GEN. (RETD.)
BHUWAN CHANDRA KHANDURI: Will