

Technology for mixed farming of agriculture and livestock has been developed and recommended.

Exotic rabbits have been introduced for their adoption in Sikkim conditions.

The Krishi Vigyan Kendra established at Saramra organised 255 training courses benefitting 2009 farmers, farm-women and rural youths. It also organised demonstrations of improved package of production technology covering major food crops, pulses, oilseeds horticultural crops.

SAARC Reserve Fund for Economic Activities

639. SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there were any differences of opinion between the delegations of India and Pakistan on the creation of Reserve Fund for Economic Activities under the auspices of SAARC at the recent Maldives Meet;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of other member nations to the Indian stand?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAV-SINH SOLANKI): (a) to (c) At the recent Meeting of the SAARC Council of Ministers in Male, there was no proposal to create a Reserve Fund for Economic Activities. However, there was discussion, at the officials level, on a proposal to create, with external assistance, a Regional Fund for SAARC programmes in general. Most Member States, including Pakistan, favour the principle of creating a SAARC Regional Fund, although they differ on details. India believes that such a Fund is neither necessary, nor desirable, nor even feasible. The SAARC Council of Ministers decided to convene an Expert Group Meeting to examine carefully all the issues relating to this proposal.

12.00 hrs.

[*Translation*]

SHRI SURAJ MANDAL (Godda): Mr. Speaker, Sir, following the Supreme Court's order holding the levy of cess on mineral wealth in Bihar as unconstitutional, Government of Bihar is suffering a loss of about Rs. 2 crore daily. The Chief Minister of the State met the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister in this connection. In this regard, I would like to point out that there has been no increase in the rate of royalty of Rs. 5 per tonne, which was fixed 15 years back. The State Government had written to the Union Minister of Energy on 13-3-91 to revise the rate of royalty according to the current value of rupee, but the request has not been considered so far.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the financial condition of the State has deteriorated to such an extent that the work on all schemes has come to a standstill. In this connection, the Chief Minister of the State had also given notice to sit on fast unto death on 29th July in front of the Prime Minister's office in protest against Centre's reluctance to solve this problem. Therefore, I want that the Government should take a decision in this regard today itself.

The situation in the State has taken an ugly turn because the State Government has been suffering a loss of about Rs. 2 crore daily. The State Governments of Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Orissa etc. are also suffering losses on this account. Since the financial condition of Bihar is critical, it is very necessary to take a decision urgently in the matter....
...(Interruptions).....

[*English*]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): The revision of royalty on coal is pending for several years. The Central Government is not taking any decision on the royalty on coal to be paid to the State Governments. Why are they dragging the matter?