

[Translation]

National Seeds Project Phase-III

2156. SHRI RUDRASEN CHAUDHARY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the achievements made so far under the National Seeds Project Phase-III;

(b) the future plans under the project;

(c) whether farmers have also been covered under the Seeds Production Programme; and

(d) if so, the number of the farmers and the extent of area covered under the Seed Production Programme, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) The National Seeds Project Phase-III, a 64 years Project was cleared in March, 1990. So far, National Seeds Corporation, State Farms Corporation of India and State Seeds Corporation of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh have been taken up for consultancy study. Agreed Action Plan for Andhra Pradesh State Seed Development Corporation has been finalised. Proposals for strengthening of Varietal Development Programme in 52 ICAR projects have been sanctioned. The proposals for strengthening of A.P. State Seed Certification Agency and Assam State Seed Certification Agency at a cost of Rs. 110 lakhs and Rs. 71 lakhs respectively have been sanctioned. Under the Project, NABARD has so far sanctioned investment credit proposals for an amount of Rs. 757.06 lakhs in the private sector.

(b) All project components are to be implemented within the given time frame.

(c) No, Sir, only seed producing agencies are covered for availing investment credit facilities from NABARD.

(d) In view of (c) above, question does not arise.

[English]

Message to African National Congress Conference

2157. SHRIMATI BIBHU KUMARI DEVI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister had sent any message to the recently concluded Conference of African National Congress;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have any information about the outcome of the Conference;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government have proposed to render any effective help and aid to the planned struggle there; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) The Prime Minister sent two messages to the African National Congress Conference held in Durban from July 2-7, 1991—one in his capacity as Prime Minister and the other as President of the Indian National Congress (I). In these messages the Prime Minister reiterated India's support to the ANC and to the quest for the creation of a non racial, democratic and unitary South Africa, based on universal suffrage.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The ANC Conference consolidated Nelson Mandela's leadership of the Movement by electing him President of the African National Congress and prepared the organisation for negotiations with the South African

Government. In addition, the Conference mandated the ANC leadership to pursue negotiations through an All-Party Conference with the South African Government on the Constitutional principles that would guide the Constituent Assembly. The Conference also adopted a 3-phase plan for lifting of sanctions after obstacles to negotiations are removed, an interim Government established and a democratic Constitution adopted.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(f) India has always been in the forefront of the anti-apartheid struggle. The Indian Government continues to give moral, material and political support to the ANC and other anti-apartheid organisations. During the visit of Dr. Nelson Mandela to India, a cheque of US \$ 5 million was handed to him for the resettlement of the ANC exiles. Effective assistance is also being rendered in providing vocational and technical training facilities to members of the black majority in South Africa.

New Steel Plants

2158. SHRI GOPINATH GAJAPATHI: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have any proposal for setting up of new major steel plants in the Eighth Plan; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEB): (a) and (b) Proposals for setting up Steel Plants at Vijayanagar in Karnataka and Daitari in Orissa have been under consideration of the Government. Final decision on implementation of these projects would depend upon the availability of funds in the VIII Plan period.

Basmati Rice

2159. SHRI GOVINDRAO NIKAM: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Basmati rice is one of the main foreign exchange earning food product of the country;

(b) if so, the steps the Government propose to take to increase the production of the Basmati rice;

(c) whether the Government propose to supply Basmati rice seed at subsidised rate to the farmers of the hilly and tribal areas;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) For increasing the production of Basmati Rice for export, 20 districts have been identified in Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Integrated Programme in Rice Development. For propagating the adoption of improved Basmati Rice production technology, assistance is being provided to the farmers of the identified districts for use of inputs like seeds, micro nutrients, pesticides, farm implements, plant protection equipment, etc. Apart from this, field demonstrations in Basmati Rice production are also organised, besides conducting training programmes for the farmers and farm labourers.

(c) to (e) The seed of Basmati Rice is being provided to the farmers of 20 selected districts at a subsidy of Rs. 200 per quintal. Assistance through this scheme is being provided mainly to the Small and Marginal farmers. However, other category of farmers also get assistance to some extent under this programme. There is no proposal to supply seeds of Basmati Rice on subsidy to the farmers of hilly