

**Food Production in Himachal Pradesh**1563. **Shri Hem Raj:****Shri From Chand Verma:**

Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Himachal Pradesh Territory is deficit in foodgrains and there has been failure of crops due to want of rains for the last three years;

(b) if so, the quantity of foodgrains that were demanded by it from the Centre; and

(c) the quantity of foodgrains supplied by the Centre to it after the creation of single State Food Zone from April, 1967 onwards till the end of May, 1967?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Cooperation (Shri Annasahib Shinde): (a) There is no set formula to determine whether a State is surplus or deficit in foodgrains. As such, it is difficult to state whether Himachal Pradesh Territory is deficient in foodgrains. There has been deficiency in rainfall in Himachal Pradesh during the last two years and the production of foodgrains has been less than what it was in 1964-65.

(b) In April, 1967, Himachal Pradesh Government asked for 13,771 tonnes of foodgrains per month from the Centre.

(c) The quantity of imported wheat despatched to Himachal Pradesh was a little less than 2,000 tonnes in April and 4,000 tonnes in May. In addition, Punjab has offered to supply 2,000 tonnes each of indigenous wheat and rice to Himachal Pradesh.

**Charter Flights for Foreign Tourists**1564. **Shri M. R. Krishna:****Shri C. Dass:**

Will the Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the chartered flights for foreign tourists had become popular; and

(b) if so, the reasons for discontinuing them?

The Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation (Dr. Karan Singh): (a) Destination charters of tourist groups to India started operating from late 1966 after the relaxation of restrictions on them. This being the first year of their operation, the idea of charter flights is yet to gain wide popularity.

(b) They have not been discontinued.

**Rain Prospects**1565. **Shri Nitraj Singh Chaudhary:****Shri Swell:****Dr. Karni Singh:****Shrimati Nirlep Kaur:****Shri Kikar Singh:****Shri Barrow:****Shri Kojal Birua:**

Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that American experts apprehend third year of drought this year in India specially in Madhya Pradesh; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken for ensuring supplies of foodgrains and water to such areas where drought is expected?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Cooperation (Shri Annasahib Shinde): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

**Withdrawal of Jeeps from N.E.S. Blocks**1566. **Shri K. Lakkappa:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether proposal of the late Prime Minister Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri with respect to the withdrawal of jeeps from N.E.S. blocks has been dropped; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Cooperation (Shri Annasahib Shinde): (a) and (b). Following the debate, arising out of a resolution moved by a Member in the 3rd Lok Sabha, on 11th December 1964, and subsequent meeting which the then Minister of Community Development and Cooperation had on 9th March, 1965 with the representatives of various political parties in Parliament, the proposal for complete withdrawal of jeeps from the Community Development Blocks was dropped. Instead, instructions were issued to the State Governments for complete withdrawal of the jeeps from the Blocks during the period of elections, commencing from the date of nomination till the date of polling, and also for framing a set of rules governing the use of jeeps in normal times. These suggestions have been implemented by the State Governments.

**Rise in Prices of Certain Commodities in West Bengal**

1567. Shri Samar Guha: Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that prices of potatoes, mustard oil, pulses, etc. have suddenly shot up in West Bengal;

(b) whether Government are also aware that these items are imported into West Bengal from other States and that some wholesale dealers have created artificial scarcity of these commodities; and

(c) if so, the steps the Central Government propose to take to help the West Bengal Government in getting the above food items from other states at reasonable prices?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Cooperation (Shri Annasahib Shinde): (a) There has been a rise in the wholesale

prices of mustard oil since April 1967 and those of pulses and potatoes since February 1967 in the Calcutta market.

(b) and (c). The problems of the three commodities are different. West Bengal produced a good crop of potatoes this year; and, in addition, the potato production in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab, which are also markets from which West Bengal gets potatoes, was good. There is no data as to the relative influence of the internal crop and the external crop on the price situation in West Bengal. In mustard, West Bengal imports mustard on a large scale from various parts of the country and controls the bulk of the mustard oil trade of several States through the milling industry in West Bengal. Here relative contribution of the mustard production centres and the milling trade in the price factor is not quite clear. West Bengal is a net importer of pulses. The pulse crop, this year, has been on the whole poor. None of these three commodities are under any control, at present, except that movement of potatoes from Bihar is banned due to scarcity conditions in that State.

**Credit Agricultural Corporation**

1568. Shri Bhandir Singh: Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether the scheme for setting up Agricultural Credit Corporations in the States has been finalised;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons for the delay?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Cooperation (Shri Annasahib Shinde): (a) it has been decided to undertake enabling legislation for setting up agricultural credit corporation in the States of Assam, West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Rajasthan and the Union Territories of Manipur and Tripura.