

Conversion of AIR into an Autonomous Organisation

989. SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether a proposal to take away the All India Radio from the control of his Ministry and convert it into an autonomous organisation like BBC is under consideration of Government; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI V. N. GADGIL) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Dry-Land Farming Plan to Boost Agricultural Production

990. SHRI K. PRADHANI : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have formulated any long term intensified dryland farming plan to boost agricultural production throughout the country with a view to have strong national food security system and a balanced economic growth in rural parts of the country;

(b) if so, the broad outlines thereof; and

(c) the role assigned or proposed to be assigned to State Governments and their various agencies ?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI BUTA SINGH) : (a) to (c). The Government has accorded high priority to dryland development programmes which have been included as item No. 1 of the new 20-point programme. These programmes *inter alia* aim at increasing the production of main dryland crops, namely, pulses, oilseeds and coarsegrains, in order to stabilise and increase foodgrains production and raise productivity in rainfed areas. Broadly, these programmes aim at

improving the productivity of land through appropriate land treatment measures coupled with suitable agronomical practices. The programmes are reviewed from time to time with the State Governments and other agencies.

Socio-Economic Condition of Rural and Unorganised Labour

991. SHRI JAGANNATH PATNAIK : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have undertaken any fresh study to assess the present socio-economic condition of the rural labour, particularly unorganised labour; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI T. ANJIAH) : (a) and (b). Four Tripartite Study Groups have been constituted, with representatives of Central/State Governments, Workers and Employers, to examine the working and living conditions and to suggest administrative as well as legislative measures considered necessary, in respect of the workers employed in the following sectors of unorganised labour :

- (i) Handloom and Powerloom;
- (ii) Leather;
- (iii) Fishermen; and
- (iv) Building and Construction.

Production and Demand of Sugar

992. SHRI K. PRADHANI : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether his Ministry has worked out the possible shortfall during the current season on the basis of a revised estimate of sugar, production and demand;

(b) if so, Government's assessment of the situation;

(c) whether Government propose to import sugar this year also to tide over the likely shortage of the commodity in the coming months;

(d) if so, the countries of import and whether it will be on Government account