

(d) whether the suggestions have been accepted by Govt. and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI V. N. GADGIL) : (a) Yes, Sir. A three day National Colloquium on 'Television-Today and Tomorrow' was held at Delhi from March 22, 1986 under the aegis of NAMEDIA Foundation. A cross-section of people, interested and involved in media activities (including some Journalists) were invited to participate in its deliberations.

(b) According to reports, a free and frank discussion was held on various aspects of Doordarshan's working, programmes, activities, constraints and impediments, etc.

(c) No specific suggestions of the National Colloquium have so far been received by the Government.

(d) Does not arise.

Payment of Crop Insurance Claims

7258. SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK :

SHRI SUBHASH YADAV :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that fresh finance is being issued to farmers from 1 April, 1986 ;

(b) if so, whether the non-payment of claims by General Insurance Company will cause the farmers hardships for borrowing fresh loans for their ensuring crop production ;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ; and

(d) the steps proposed to expedite the payment of claims to farmers by General Insurance Company ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA) : (a) Yes, Sir,

(b) and (c). In certain States like Gujarat, substantial claims were made and these have been investigated. The claims have not been settled. In response to a request from Gujarat State Cooperative Bank, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has already advised it to grant extension of the due date of repayment in such areas. This was done to help settlement of claims by the General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC) and completion of formalities for conversion of the balance amount of loans. In the process, the affected farmers would be eligible for fresh finance.

(d) General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC) has already settled claims of farmers in six States ; and has initiated steps for settling the pending claims expeditiously.

Improvement in Agriculture Sector

7259. SHRI SUBHASH YADAV : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state.

(a) the measures Union Government propose to take to improve India's ranking in the agriculture sector in view of the fact that agriculture accounts for 40 per cent of the national income of the country and 75 per cent of the people eke out their living from agriculture only ; and

(b) the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA) : (a) and (b). In order to improve India's ranking in the agricultural sector, the following measures are being taken :

(i) Maximisation of productivity in irrigated areas ;

(ii) Timely, easy and adequate supply of agricultural inputs like technology, seeds fertilisers, implements, plant protection chemicals, credit, etc. ;

(iii) Increasing the area under High Yielding Varieties Programme ;

(iv) Greater attention to dryland farming through watershed manage-