

Zone to West Bengal at 2 to 2.5 lakh tonnes per month.

### Supply of Foodgrains to West Bengal

17. SHRI SATYAGOPAL MISRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Centre had promised to supply 150 rakes of foodgrains a month to West Bengal to meet its requirement;

(b) if so, whether Government are aware that the supply of foodgrains was 93 rakes in February, 122 rakes in March and the Centre is now failing to maintain even the minimum supply of 3.5 a day; and

(c) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) Yes, Sir. Keeping in view the demand of the State, the target for movement of 150 Rakes per month has been fixed.

(b) The actual receipt during February to May, 1980 has been 94, 122, 116 and 112 rakes respectively.

(c) All possible efforts are being made to step up the despatches from Punjab and Haryana from the present of about 7.3 lakh tonnes to 10 lakh tonnes per month as this alone can satisfy the requirements of States like Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal etc. to the full extent of their progressively increasing demand projections.

### Excise Duty on Imported Cocoa

18. SHRI K. A. RAJAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to withdraw the excise duty on imported Cocoa;

(b) if so, whether Government are aware that this will cause harm to the Cocoa cultivators in Kerala, Tamil

Nadu, Karnataka etc., who are now facing a crisis following surplus production; and

(c) if so, whether Government propose to reconsider its decision to import Cocoa?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) and (b). The Hon'ble Member is perhaps referring to the customs duty imported cocoa since excise duty is not leviable on imports. A scheme has been recently introduced under which imports are allowed free of duty for the purposes of export production. Under this scheme, exporters of cocoa products can import cocoa beans free of customs duty.

Imports under this scheme are not likely to have any adverse affect on the domestic cultivators of cocoa since the quantity imported is only meant for production of food products meant for exports.

(c) Does not arise.

### Thresher Accidents

19. SHRI JHARKHANDE RAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the reports about the thousands of thresher accidents in U.P., Delhi, Punjab, Haryana etc.;

(b) if so, the details thereof and measures taken by the Union Government to decrease the thresher accidents and also to extend the Industrial Safety Act to farm labour and to make compensation compulsory?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) Yes, Sir, the Government are aware of the Newspaper Reports on Thresher accidents.

(b) Statement is enclosed.