

(c) the impact of the said measures on the steadily raising price line ?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (RAO BIRENDRA SINGH) : (a) to (c) The main thrust of the Government policy is to increase the production of essential commodities, particularly the ones which are in short supply. The Public Distribution System is being streamlined and expanded. Some of the essential commodities are imported to supplement the domestic supply. The export of essential commodities is regulated. Continuous action is being taken against the blackmarketeers and profiteers under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and the Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980. As per available information, during the first six months of the current year, 2404 persons have been arrested under the Essential Commodities Act, and 40 persons have been ordered to be detained under the Prevention of Blackmarketing Act. These measures are expected to keep the prices of essential commodities in check.

Area of the Country Prone to soil erosion

3202. **SHRI SUKH RAM :** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the total area of the country which is prone to soil erosion;

(b) area treated so far and the cost thereof ;

(c) whether Government have prepared or propose to prepare a comprehensive plan to tackle this problem;

(d) if so, the share of Himachal Pradesh of such land (i.e. prone to soil erosion) and the estimated cost involved in treating this land in order to save particularly the hydroelectric Dams from silting; and

(e) how is this expenditure going to be financed ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR) : (a) Erosion as a natural process is going on all over the country. However, as per report of the National Commission on Agriculture, area subjected to accelerated erosion by water and wind is estimated to be about 150 million ha., while total area subject to soil erosion and other land degradation processes is estimated at 175 million ha.

(b) Till 1984-85, an area of about 29.38 million ha. has been treated by various soil and water conservation measures both under State and Central Sector schemes, at a cost of about Rs. 1200 crores.

(c) Government have continued during 1985-86 the programmes to control soil erosion of agricultural and non-agricultural lands, reduce siltation of major and medium reservoirs, constructed for generation of irrigation and hydro-electricity moderate flood havoc in the productive plains and restore degraded and under-utilised area to obtain additional land stock for productive management, etc. A larger and diversified programme has been proposed for implementation during the Seventh Plan to enhance productivity of land, generate employment opportunities in rural areas and maintain beneficial relationship between land and water cycle.

(d) and (e) In absence of a comprehensive survey, exact of extent problem area in Himachal Pradesh which are subject to soil erosion and land degradation as well as total estimate of cost of treating such areas are not available. However, the higher siltation rate in the Govind Sagar Reservoir and heavy silt load from the watersheds indicate that erosion is extensive and serious.

Besides State Sector scheme, Central assistance has been provided to Himachal Pradesh through the following schemes :

(i) Soil conservation in the catchments of River Valley Projects of Bhakra and Beas.

- (ii) Integrated watershed management in Flood-prone River catchments of Upper Yamuna.
- (iii) Soil, water and tree conservation in the Himalayas. In 1984-85, the progress made in Himachal Pradesh is as follows :

	Physical (lakh ha.)	Financial (Rs. in crores)
State Sector	0.89	20.71
Central Sector	1.88	29.79
Total	2.77	50.50

Action Regarding Insurance against crop loan Granted by Banks

3203. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have taken any action regarding insurance against crop loan granted by the banks during the current year as mentioned in his budget speech ;

(b) if so, the details of the districts which come under its purview;

(c) whether the Andaman district has taken any action in this regard; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR) : (a) In accordance with the announcement made by the Finance Minister in his budget speech, the details of a comprehensive Scheme of Crop Insurance commencing from Kharif 1985 were worked out. The scheme is operated by the General Insurance Corporation of India in collaboration with the State Governments. All farmers availing of crop loans from Cooperatives, Commercial Banks and

Regional Rural Banks for raising the crops, namely, rice, wheat, millets, Oilseeds and pulses in the 'Defined Areas' in the States are covered under the scheme.

(b) The scheme is applicable for raising the aforesaid crops in the 'Defined Areas' in all the State which have taken action to implement the scheme with effect from Kharif 1985.

(c) and (d) The Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands have not taken action to implement the scheme from Kharif 1985. They have not indicated the reasons for not starting the implementation of the scheme.

12.00 hrs

SHRI G.G. SWELL (Shillong) : I thank you for having given me the permission because I had written to you. You know that in South Africa things are going very badly. The war against the abominable principle of apartheid is reaching wide proportions. The whole world is exercised about it.

MR. SPEAKER : I have got it.

SHRI G.G. SWELL : Even President Reagan is forced to impose economic sanctions against South Africa.

MR. SPEAKER : That is not the way. You have already sent your Short Notice Question. I will consider it.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I said I will consider the ways and means how to do it. We shall see. I will consider it.

PROF. K.K. TEWARY (Buxar) : The racist Government of South Africa is trying to drive a wedge between the Government of India and Indians on the one hand and the persecuted Blacks of South Africa and other African countries. I want the Minister to make a statement.