

South-West monsoon

2801. DR. B. L. SHAILESH : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the South-West monsoon which set in somewhat behind the schedule in most parts of the country as shown a rather subdued progress during the last one and a half months; and

(b) how far it has hit the timely sowing operations and kharif target as things stand at present ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY & IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL) :
(a) There are 35 meteorological sub-divisions in the whole country. According to sub-division wise rainfall distribution as on 30th July, 1986, the rainfall was normal in 21 sub-divisions, excess in 2 sub-divisions and deficient in 12 sub-divisions. The number of sub-divisions with normal/excess rainfall this year (23) compares favourably with the corresponding figure of 23-25 during the period 1983-85, which were good monsoon years.

(b) The pre-monsoon/monsoon showers during the month of June, this year facilitated showing of the Kharif crops. The rains have revived after the break in the monsoon during the first fortnight of July. The overall position in respect of kharif crop targets is satisfactory.

Shortage of fuel-wood

2802. SHRI H. B. PATIL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether efforts have been made to meet the acute shortage of fuel-wood in the country;

(b) whether any steps have been taken to improve the survival of plantations for tackling this problem; and

(c) if so, whether some suggestions have been obtained from experts to solve the country's ecological crisis created by deforestation ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI) : (a) Yes, Sir. A two-pronged strategy consisting of increasing the availability of fire-wood through massive afforestation and reduction in demand through popularising non-conventional energy sources, improved chullahas and fuel efficient crematoria has been taken up.

(b) Yes, Sir. It is being achieved through improved planting stock and planting practices, closer supervision and systematic inspection by the officials of the Forest Department, regular monitoring by the State and the Central Government and through enlisting people's participation/cooperation.

(c) Yes, Sir.

Modernisation of conventional rice mills

2803. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have taken steps to modernise the conventional rice mills;

(b) if so, the number of conventional rice mills set up in Orissa that have been modernised in the last three years; and

(c) the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI A. K. PANJA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government of Orissa has reported that 244 conventional rice mills consisting of one battery of hullers, 186 huller-cum-shellers and 57 shellers have been modernised.