

Setting up of Apple Seedling Bank

2051. SHRI HARISH RAWAT : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to set up apple-seedling bank with a view to supply modern quality apple seedling to garden owners in those parts of the country where apple is grown;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the steps proposed to be taken by Government to increase per hectare production of apples in those areas with a view to bring the country at par with other countries, particularly the United States of America in this matter ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION, IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA) : (a) and (b). At present there is no proposal under the consideration of Government of India to set up apple-seedling bank.

(c) Government of India is implementing a centrally sponsored scheme on improved technology for quality apple production in Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh. Under Indo-Australian Apple Technology Extension Project, improved technology for apple production is being imparted to growers in Jammu and Kashmir. Super varieties of apple which have high productivity have been introduced in the country. Government of India through National Horticulture Board has taken up a project for production and supply of quality planting material. Under this project plants of high yielding varieties of apples will also be produced. Besides, State Governments are implementing programmes for increasing apple production. Agricultural Universities in Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir are conducting research for improving existing cultivation practices.

[English]

Proposal to Close Down Loss Making Fertiliser Units of H.F.C.

2052. SHRI MOHD. MAHFOOZ ALI KHAN :
SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to close down the loss making public sector fertiliser units in the country;

(b) if so, the comparative loss incurred by each of these public sector fertiliser units during the last three years, year-wise;

(c) the major factors responsible for the losses; and

(d) to what extent the production of fertilisers by the public sector units in the country is estimated to fall short with the closure of the loss making units ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FERTILIZERS IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. PRABHU) : (a) No. Sir, no decision has been taken to close down the three fertilizer units of Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Limited.

(b) to (d). Do not arise.

Panchayati Raj Institutions

2053. SHRI SHARAD DIGHE : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have formulated any plan to rejuvenate and revitalise Panchayati Raj institutions;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the expert committee set up under the chairmanship of Shri L.M. Singhvi has prepared a concept paper on law to rejuvenate and revitalise Panchayati Raj institutions ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAMANAND YADAV) (a) and (b). The Minister of Agriculture and later even the Prime Minister has written to the Chief Ministers of State Governments including Union Territories to hold regular elections to the