

appointed in accordance with the guidelines of the Centrally sponsored scheme for assisting State women's development corporations.

Panchayati Raj System in States

2320. SHRI SHIKANTA DATTA NARASIMHARAJA WADIYAR : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the States where Panchayati Raj system is working ;

(b) whether Government have a proposal for the revival of the Panchayati Raj system in all the States ;

(c) if so, whether it is proposed to be revived during the current financial year ; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) to (d). All the States excepting Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland and the Union Territories excepting Lakshadweep and Pondicherry have Panchayati Raj system with varying degrees of powers and functions. The Union Government have been impressing on the State Governments on the need to hold timely elections to these bodies and give them adequate powers and functions so that they become vibrant instruments of popular participation in the development process.

In Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland, there are traditional tribal councils/village councils. In Pondicherry though the Panchayati Raj Act came into force in 1974, it is yet to be enforced. In the case of Lakshadweep, the Panchayati Raj Act has recently been passed and the Rules are under formulation.

Shortage of Seeds

2321 SHRIMATI VYJAYANTHIMALA BALI : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is acute shortage of groundnut seeds and also seeds for Kharif

crops ; and

(b) the steps taken for procurement and supply of seeds with high germination value ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV) : (a) Yes, Sir. There is some shortage of seeds of oilseeds including groundnut, pulses, paddy, maize, jowar, cotton and jute.

(b) The State Governments were advised to make arrangements by procuring good quality seeds after duly testing for germination, etc.

Floods in Bihar

2322. SHRIMATI MADHUREE SINGH : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether due to recent floods more than six lakh people have been affected in Bihar State ;

(b) if so, whether Union Government have sent a Central team to assess the damage caused by the floods ;

(c) whether Union Government have so far provided any kind of assistance to the State Government of Bihar to meet the situation ; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Explosion in Bokaro Steel Plant

2323. SHRI MANVENDRA SINGH : SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA :

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :