

Setting up of Sugar Industries in Tamilnadu

7747. SHRI G. BHUVARAHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state how many Sugar Factories have been asked by Tamil Nadu Government for the past three years and how many of them have been given licences and how many of them have started functioning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH): Two applications for establishment of new sugar units were submitted by the Tamil Nadu State Sugar Corporation Ltd., out of which one has been granted industrial licence.

Agriculture as Basic Industry

7748. SHRI HARI SHANKAR SHAHAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to declare agriculture as a basic industry;

(b) whether Government also propose to give right to the tiller for the rapid development of agriculture and extend liberal credit to the farmer at reasonable interest and in time; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): (a) The present Government accords primacy to agriculture.

(b) and (c). The national policy is the conferment of ownership rights on tenants, and a large number of States have enacted legislations conferring such rights. In the other States, legislations provide for the security of tenure of tenants which consist primarily in the freedom from wilful ejectment by land-lords. As regards agricultural credit, the policy of the

Government is to increase progressively the coverage of institutional credit for agricultural development. The important steps taken in this direction are the building up of a viable and efficient multi-purpose primary cooperative society at the base level, strengthening the cooperative credit institutions in technical and managerial competence and financial resources, widening the coverage of membership, particularly of weaker sections, expanding the commercial banks branch network in rural areas, establishing regional rural banks and periodical review of the loaning policies and procedures to facilitate smoother flow of credit. Steps are also being taken to reduce the rate of interest charged by the institutional credit agencies. The scheme of differential rates of interest operated by commercial banks has been extended to cover the entire country. Under this scheme, loans are available for certain priority groups, including small farmers, at 4 per cent rate of interest. The Reserve Bank of India has provided a soft loan window with effect from 1st January 1978, to commercial banks to enable them to advance to small farmers short-term and medium-term loans of less than Rs. 2,500 at 11 per cent rate of interest. Similarly, for the cooperatives, the Reserve Bank of India has reduced the leading rate to 3 per cent below the Bank Rate for short-term loans and 2½ per cent below the Bank Rate for medium-term loans. The Government of India have also announced withdrawal of the tax on interest so that the scheduled banks can pass on the benefit to the ultimate borrowers by way of reduction in rate of interest.

बिहार के लिए सिचाई योजना

7749. श्री ईश्वर चौधरी : क्या कृषि और सिचाई मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) बिहार में ऐसी कितनी सिचाई योजनाएं आरम्भ की जायेंगी जिन पर केन्द्रीय सरकार ने स्वीकृति दे दी है ;