

(c) if not, the reasons for the same?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Since the continuation or otherwise of the Central participation by way of Centrally Sponsored/Central Sector Scheme is yet to be finalised in the light of the discussion of the National Development Council, no final decision has been taken.

Fodder Production in Ladakh

3605. SHRIMATI PARVATI DEVI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether diminishing fodder production in Ladakh is causing adverse effect on the cattle; and

(b) if so, Central proposal to increase fodder output to support live stock population?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): (a) We have not received any report from the Government of Jammu and Kashmir to this effect.

(b) The Government of India established a Regional Station for Forage Production and Demonstration for the temperate/alpine region at Shahema and it is proposed to start one sub-station of this unit at Leh. Preliminary work on testing of various fodder species has already been started.

Under the Desert Development Programme in Ladakh during 1978-79, an outlay of Rs 3.13 lakhs has been sanctioned on 100 per cent grant basis for the fodder bank to be established at Changthang and Rs. 4.63 lakhs for establishment of grass-land station at Changthang and Naddar.

Execution of the above projects will materially help in augmenting fodder resources in Ladakh area.

Blocking Money in creating Buffer Stock of Sugar

3606. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to create a buffer stock of 5 lakhs tonnes of sugar;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that this decision will involve locking up of more than 100 crores of rupees; and

(c, if so, the reasons for (a) above?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). The modalities of acquisition, holding and pricing in this regard are being worked out. Hence, it will be too early to predict the extent of financial involvement of Government in this matter. However, the decision to create a buffer stock has been taken to even out the fluctuations of demand and supply of sugar and impart liquidity and viability to the industry, thereby enabling them primarily to clear dues to the cane growers. The creation of buffer stock has been advocated in the past by several expert bodies, such as, Sen Commission, Tariff Commission and Sugar Industry Enquiry Commission.

S.C./S.T. Posts Lying Vacant in Postal Engineering, Telegraph and Telephone Circles

3607. SHRI KUSUMA KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) total number of Class I, II, III and IV posts lying vacant, reserved for Scheduled Tribes in each circle of postal engineering, telegraph and telephone as on 1st January, 1979; and