

Cocoa Production

702. SHRI P. J. KURIAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of Cocoa production in India during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) whether Government are aware that production of Cocoa has been increasing due to the fact that more and more agriculturists in Kerala and Karnataka are taking to Cocoa cultivation;

(c) whether Government are aware that prices of Cocoa have been falling causing alarm among its cultivators;

(d) if so, whether there is a proposal to export Cocoa in order to stabilise its prices and also earn foreign exchange; and

(e) the other step, if any, proposed to see that the Cocoa cultivators get remunerative prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) Official estimate of Cocoa production are not being compiled.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Prices of Cocoa have of late, been showing down-ward trend. However, as Cocoa is mainly grown as an intercrop in, Coconut and Arecanut gardens as a supplementary source of income, the fall in prices is not to such a level as to cause alarm among the cultivators.

(d) At present, India is importing Cocoa. Cocoa being a decontrolled item, exports can take place when surplus exists.

(e) The Government is taking steps to improve on farm processing, so that quality of beans produced by farmers is better to enable them to obtain remunerative prices.

Setting up of a Petro-Chemical Company in Madhya Pradesh

703. SHRI SHIV KUMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering seriously for setting up of 'Petro-Chemicals Complex' in Madhya Pradesh in the near future;

(b) if so, the details thereof, together with its location;

(c) whether the said complex is going to be set up in Khandwa District in Madhya Pradesh; and

(d) if so, when and if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL): (a) to (d). Based on the recommendations of the Reconstituted Working Group on Petro-chemicals, action is being taken to set up certain petro-chemical plants in the country. The locations of these plants will be suggested by Site-Selection Committees, which are being appointed.

Fishing Harbour at Paradip Port, Orissa

704. SHRI LAKSHMAN MALLICK: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to set up a fishing harbour at the Paradip Port in Orissa; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The fishing harbour is designed to facilitate operation of 250 mechanised boats of 12 metres size and 20 vessels of size ranging from 16 metres