

from 18-2-1980 and the strike continued till end of July. Due to their strike, at a time when farming operations ought to have been at their peak, and apprehending permanent damage to the farm, the State Government wrote to us expressing its willingness to undertake the management of the farm as a prelude to the transfer of the farm to the State Government or to an agency of the State Government. The strike has since been called off.

Setting up of Sugar Mills in Punjab

7570. SHRI L. S. TUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Punjab Government have approached the Central Government for setting up five sugar mills; and

(b) if so, the steps taken so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government of Punjab have recommended for setting up of six new sugar mills in the State.

(b) The Central Government have requested the Government of Punjab to furnish latest information regarding sugarcane availability etc. for each of the six proposals recommended for establishment of new sugar factories. On receipt of the required information from the State Government, necessary action will be taken to examine the proposals in accordance with the guidelines for licensing of new sugar factories issued by the Government of India on 4th July, 1980.

Improvement in Farm Production

7571. SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have taken a decision to improve farm production in various States of the country; and

(b) if so, the facilities which are proposed to be provided to the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) and (b). A number of programmes aimed at improving farm production in various States of the country are already being implemented both in the Centrally Sponsored Sector and State Sector. The facilities provided to the farmers under the programmes are:—

(i) subsidising the cost of good quality certified seed;

(ii) subsidising the cost of plant protection chemicals and operational charges;

(iii) laying out demonstration on improved management practices on farmer's fields;

(iv) supply of minikits of new and High Yielding varieties of seed free of cost;

(v) organising training programmes;

(vi) provision of institutional credit.

Houses for the Rural Poor in Orissa

7572. SHRI IAKSHMAN MALLICK: Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING be pleased to state the number of houses which have been provided to the rural poor and the number of houses which are likely to be constructed for allotment to the rural poor during the current calendar year in Orissa State?

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI P. C. SETHI): The Government of Orissa had constructed 17,176 houses including 8,171 houses for landless families under house sites-cum-hut construction programme, for rural poor upto the end of 1979-80. They intend to give loan for the construction of 420 houses under Village Housing Projects