

सभी व्यक्तियों को शिक्षा प्राप्त करने के समान अवसर प्राप्त हो सकें;

(ख) क्या सरकार का विचार देश की सभी पाठशालाओं को 'पब्लिक स्कूलों' में बदल देने का है; और

(ग) इस संबंध में की जा रही कार्यवाही का व्यौरा क्या है ?

शिक्षा तथा स्वास्थ्य और समाज कल्याण मंत्री (श्री बी० शंकरानन्द) : (क) संविधान के अनुच्छेद 45 में सभी बच्चों के लिए जब तक कि वे 14 वर्ष की आयु पूरी नहीं कर लेते, निशुल्क और अनिवार्य शिक्षा की परिकल्पना की गई है। सरकार ने इस लक्ष्य की प्राप्ति के लिए प्रारम्भिक शिक्षा को उच्च प्राथमिकता कार्यक्रम के रूप में व्यापक बनाने का कार्य प्रारम्भ कर दिया है।

(ख) जी, नहीं।

(ग) प्रश्न नहीं उठता।

#### Fall in Rice production during 1978

2667. SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether rice production went down by 11.7 million tonnes from 80.7 million tonnes in 1978 to 69 million tonnes in 1979; and

(b) if so, the reasons for this fall in production?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO): (a) and (b). Final estimates of rice production for the year 1979-80

have not yet become available from all the State Governments. However, according to current assessment, the production of rice during 1979-80 is likely to register a sharp decline compared to the level of 53.83 million tonnes in 1978-79 due largely to a severe drought in many parts of the country.

#### Working of F.C.I

2468. SHRI R. R. BHOLE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are any complaints to Government on the working of the Food Corporation of India;

(b) what was the cost of operation in 1977-78, 1978-79 and 1979-80 and the amount of subsidies given in those years; and

(c) what steps Government propose for improving the working of the F.C.I. and making it a viable unit?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO): (a) Criticism of the Food Corporation of India appears in the Press from time to time. Complaints against particular officers or of particular incidents are also received by the Government now and then.

(b) The cost of distribution and carrying cost of buffer of the Food Corporation of India in the respective years is shown below:

	Rupees per quintal		
	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80 (R.E.)
Cost of distribution . . . . .	22.12	25.68	21.38
Carrying cost of buffer . . . . .	23.62	24.58	25.68

The subsidy paid to the Food Corporation of India during 1977-78, 1978-79 and 1979-80 inclusive of payment of arrears was as under :

	Rupees in crores		
	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80 (R.E.)
	480.00	570.00	600.00