

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

(c) The Government keeps the working of the Food Corporation of India under constant review in order to bring about improvement and reduce the cost of its operations. However, in view of the fact that the Corporation is required to procure and issue foodgrains at prices fixed by the Government without any regard to the economic cost, it cannot be expected to become a self-supporting organisation.

#### **Spread of Parthenium Weed**

2469. SHRI T. R. SHAMANNA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that a havoc is being caused by the large scale spreading of parthenium weed in many parts of the country, particularly in Karnataka State;

(b) whether this unrestricted growth of weed is causing heavy loss for agriculture and to some extent it is health hazard to human beings and animals; and

(c) whether the Central Government propose to take steps to check the growth and spread of this weed?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO): (a) Government is aware that Parthenium is growing in uncultivable areas, waste and barren lands in different parts of the country particularly in Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.

(b) Enquiries from the Government of Karnataka have revealed that some agricultural land is being covered with this weed, particularly in the northern districts of the State. The Government of Karnataka has declared Parthenium as a noxious weed under the Karnataka Agricultural Pests and Diseases Act, 1968.

(c) The threat posed by the weed was considered by experts of the Government of India and the ICAR and suitable advice to tackle the problem was communicated to State Governments.

#### **U.G.C. grants to Colleges**

2470. SHRI T. R. SHAMANNA: Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

(a) how much grants have been given to colleges in different States (State-wise) in the years 1978-79 and 1979-80 by the University Grants Commission; and

(b) the main considerations taken while fixing the quantum of grants to be paid to respective colleges in different States (State-wise)?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) The information is being compiled and will be placed on the Table of the Sabha.

(b) The Commission does not fix the quantum of grants payable to colleges on a Statewise basis. According to the Criteria of eligibility laid down by the University Grants Commission for different schemes, each college coming within the purview of the UGC under Section 2(f) of the UGC Act has to apply to the Commission for assistance. Proposals for assistance are considered by the Commission and grants are sanctioned to each college on the basis of the approved pattern of assistance prescribed and other norms laid down for each scheme for which assistance is given.

#### **Number of Teachers in Secondary, College and University level**

2471. SHRI A. K. BALAN: Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of teachers working in elementary, secondary, college and university levels and their (State-wise) distribution; and