

N.B.C.C. Workers in Libya

2802. SHRI V. S. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING be pleased to state:

(a) whether 37 labourers terminated by the N.B.C.C. who were recruited for the construction works at Libya had given any petition about the bad behaviour of the N.B.C.C. Management and the grievances suffered by them at Libya; and

(b) if so, the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI BHISHMA NARAIN SINGH): (a) A representation from 36 workers who were sent back from Ghat Works in Libya, has been received.

(b) The representation has been examined. The workers had resorted to activities which were unlawful in Libya and were repatriated to India on the advice of the Libyan Government. The allegation of bad behaviour against the NBCC management has not been found to be correct. The workers having violated the Employment Agreement signed by them are liable for damages to the Corporation for breach of contract.

Loss of Paddy due to Disease

2803. SHRI L. S. TUR:

SHRI R. L. BHATIA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that paddy crops has been badly damaged by some disease in Amritsar and Gurdaspur Districts of Punjab State;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to assess the losses of victimised farmers; and

(c) whether Government decided to compensate the farmers from losses and how much grant is being given in lieu of that?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a)

The Government are aware of the damage to the paddy crop due to Bacterial Leaf Blight (ELB) disease in Amritsar and Gurdaspur districts of Punjab State.

(b) and (c). A team of agricultural scientists from the Central Government have visited the disease affected areas to investigate the reasons and to suggest remedial measures for the future.

Since eradication measures against the disease are not yet known, it was not possible to mitigate the damage. The report of the team that visited Punjab has been considered by an expert group to suggest short and long term strategy to minimise the chances of large scale development of the disease in the future. It has been recommended that tolerant varieties with wider genetic base be distributed among the farmers of the badly affected districts. It has also been recommended that early transplanting in the Punjab and application of higher doses of fertilizers should be avoided.

P.C.O. in Alibag, District Maharashtra

2804. SHRI BAPUSAHEB PARULEKAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Public Call Office at village Ambet in Alibag District in Maharashtra is con-