

Rae Bareilly factory, Government had invited limited offers from three foreign manufacturers whose equipment had been installed in the country and found satisfactory. These three foreign manufacturers are Messrs. NEC and Messrs. Hitachi of Japan and Messrs. L. M. Ericsson of Sweden. A proposal was also obtained from Indian Telephone Industries Ltd., for manufacture of the indigenously developed Indian Crossbar Project (ICP) System. An Inter-ministerial Committee evaluated the proposals received from these four manufacturers. Consideration was finally narrowed down to two proposals, namely, those from Messrs. L. M. Ericsson and Messrs. Indian Telephone Industries Ltd. Government have after careful consideration of all relevant factors, decided in favour of adopting the ICP System for manufacture at the Rae Bareilly Factory.

Suggestion by Wild Life Reservation Society to check killing of wild life

858. SHRI RAJESH KUMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Wild Life Preservations Society has recently approached the Central Government to stop indiscriminate killing of wild life and have also urged the Government to give stringent punishment to those found guilty and violating the law relating to wild life preservations; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Government is fully aware of the need for conservation of wildlife. The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, makes ample provision to penalise

poaching of wildlife. However, it is for the courts to award stringent punishment.

Welfare of Small Farmers of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

859. SHRI CHHITTUBHAI GAMIT: Will the Minister of RURAL RECONSTRUCTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any scheme for the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes particularly small farmers has been framed recently; and

(b) if so, the details regarding this scheme and the amounts provided for the scheme to control shifting cultivation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALESHWAR RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) While a number of schemes for the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are being implemented by different agencies, the Integrated Rural Development Programme of the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction is aimed at a 'target group' consisting of the weakest sections in our rural society. Agricultural labourers, small and marginal farmers, rural artisans and other poorest segments of rural society are provided assistance under this programme. Assistance under this programme is provided to the poorest among the poor first and it has been emphasised that Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe beneficiaries should be accorded priority in the identification of beneficiaries. It has been laid down that at least 20 per cent of the beneficiaries under this programme should be from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes families.

An individual Scheduled Caste family is entitled to an assistance of Rs. 3,000/- by way of subsidy. The ceiling of subsidy for Scheduled Tribes is Rs. 5,000. Scheduled Castes

beneficiaries are entitled to subsidy at the rate of 25 per cent of the cost of the scheme for small farmers and 33-1/3 per cent for marginal farmers and others. Scheduled Tribe beneficiaries are entitled to subsidy at the rate of 50 per cent of the cost of the scheme.

Under the Integrated Rural Development Programme, any viable economic activity can be taken up by the beneficiaries. Agriculture, minor irrigation and land development are among the activities eligible for assistance. No special fund has been earmarked for control of shifting cultivation under the Integrated Rural Development Programme. However, assistance provided under the IRD programme will enable farmers in certain areas now engaged in shifting cultivation to take up other types of farming and ancillary occupations.

Upward trend of prices of foodgrains due to world wide shortage

860. SHRI CHANDRABHAN ATHARE PATIL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the London based International Wheat Council have reduced its estimates of world's wheat production;

(b) if so, what steps Government would take to check the upward trend of the prices of foodgrains in India as a result of the reported world-wide shortage; and

(c) what remunerative prices Government propose to pay to the farmers for their farm produce as an incentive to boost up production of foodgrains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN):

(a) According to the "World Wheat Situation, 1979/80" brought out by the International wheat Council, world production of wheat in 1979 amounted to 425.5 million tonnes, which was lower than the previous year's record of 449.6 million tonnes by 5 per cent.

(b) A moderate decline in global wheat production would not by itself lead to an upward trend in the prices of foodgrains in India because India is not importing any cereals since 1978. However, stability in the supply of cereals and their prices is being maintained in India under the public distribution system functioning through a network of about 260 thousand ration/fair price shops.

(c) An important objective of Government policy is to assure remunerative prices to the farmers so as to provide sufficient incentive for adopting improved technology for increasing production. To achieve this objective the procurement/minimum support prices of different foodgrains have been steadily raised during the recent years as indicated by the figures below:—

Procurement/minimum support prices of agricultural commodities

(according to marketing year)

(Rs. per quintal)

Commodity	1976-77	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81
1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>Procurement Prices</i>					
Paddy (coarse)	74.00	77.00	85.00	95.00*	105.00*
Jowar	74.00	74.00	85.00	95.00	105.00
Bajra	74.00	74.00	85.00	95.00	105.00
Maize	74.00	74.00	85.00	95.00	105.00