

contracts abroad. The value of these contracts secured is as follows:

Year	Value of Contracts (Rupees in Crores)
1978-79	63.85
1979-80	68.46
1980-81	29.64

(b) and (c). Yes Sir, The reasons for the setback generally are as follows:

(i) outbreak of hostilities between Iraq and Iran, which has affected developmental activities in Iraq;

(ii) stiff competition from South East Asian Countries particularly South Korean Companies, which are of a multinational nature and also enjoy a high degree of financial support and easy terms of credit from their Governments and Banks.

(iii) competition between Indian private sector companies and public sector undertakings.

(iv) higher rates of interest charged by Indian Banks on credits thus rendering NBCC tenders somewhat uncompetitive.

(v) lower productivity of Indian workers resulting in higher incidence of labour cost in comparison with other overseas labour such as those of South Korea etc.

The steps taken by the Corporation to improve the position are broadly as follows:—

(a) continuous and sustained tendering for overseas business.

(b) proper exercise of control and direction for development of business, in short streamlining the tendering system;

(c) sustained efforts to explore overseas business in the countries

other than Iraq and Libya, to which the Corporation has been restricting earlier.

As a result of the aforesaid measures, the Corporation has been able to develop overseas business to the tune of Rs. 92.63 crores during the year 1981-82. It is expected that with further marketing thrust in other countries such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain etc. overseas development works are likely to pick up progress.

Extinction of wild plants

663. SHRI MOHAMMAD ASRAR AHMAD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that according to a study conducted by the Birbal Sahni Institute of Paleobotany, Lucknow, about 5000 useful wild plants are facing extinction due to denudation of forests; and

(b) if so, whether any steps are contemplated to identify those plant species and preserve them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRIES OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) and (b). The information is being collected and would be placed on the Table of the Sabha in due course.

Contribution of Indian scientists in increasing wheat production

664. SHRI R.L.P. VERMA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in a book "Environmental Science" (1978) published from Philadelphia, London, Toronto, it is stated that the increase in wheat production has been attributed mainly due to the extension workers and to Government for arranging high inputs in terms of irrigation and fertilizers, while there is no mention of contribution by Indian scientists; and

(b) if not, the practical contribution of Indian scientists in the increase of

wheat production and what are these wheat which fetched awards and what is their average under cultivation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRIES OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) and (b). The book entitled 'Environmental Science 1978' published from Philadelphia, London and Toronto has not been received in the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. However, it is recognised all over the world that no major increases in the production of wheat or any other crop are possible even with the application of fertilisers, irrigation and other inputs in the absence of suitable varieties which can take advantage of these inputs and improved management practices. The Indian Scientists during the last 15 years have evolved a large number of high yielding varieties of wheat and developed appropriate production and protection technologies for their successful cultivation. It is the availability of these wheat varieties including those introduced in the mid-sixties from Mexico and adoption of improved package of practices by the farmers with the help of Government agencies which have helped to double the average yield of wheat and increase the production from nearly 12 million tonnes to more than 36 million tonnes.

Indian Wheat Scientists have received awards *viz.* Barlog Award; Hari Om Award, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai (Team Award) and Punjab Farmers Award.

No separate information is collected for variety-wise average under cultivation.

Acreage under jute crop and raw jute prices fixed by A.P.C.

665. SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what was the acreage under jute crop in the last four years, year-wise;

(b) what is the anticipated acreage this year;

(c) what was the Agricultural Price Commission fixed price for raw jute during the last four years, year-wise; and

(d) whether A.P.C. price for the coming season for raw jute has been fixed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRIES OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) Area under jute and mesta during the last four years was as under:—

Year	Area (Lakhs ha.)	
	Jute	Mesta
1977-78	7.97	3.65
1978-79	8.84	3.80
1979-80	8.34	3.83
1980-81	9.41	3.59

(b) The anticipated acreage during 1981-82 has been estimated at 8.27 lakh hectares under jute and 3.27 lakh hectares under mesta.

(c) Prices fixed for raw jute during the last four years were as under:—

(Rs. per qtl.)

Year	Minimum support price of raw jute	
	Recommended by the APC	Fixed by the Govt.
1978-79	150	150
1979-80	155	155
1980-81	160	160
1981-82	175	175

(d) The A.P.C. has submitted its report on price policy of raw jute for the season 1982-83. The report is under the consideration of the Government.