

(c) to (e). Detailed data relating to cost of production are not available in a form to make a meaningful comparison.

Production, procurement and price of Cereals in West Bengal

582. SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE (KRISHI MANTRI) be pleased to state :

(a) the total production of rice, wheat and other cereals in West Bengal in 1969-70 and 1970-71 and the anticipated production in 1971-72 ;

(b) the total procurement of rice by the Food Corporation of India in 1969-70 and 1970-71 and the target of procurement for the year 1971-72 ;

(c) whether in spite of rise in production, prices of rice in West Bengal, outside the area under rationing, have increased in the recent period ; if so, the causes thereof ; and

(d) the steps, if any, taken to stabilise prices ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (KRISHI MANTRALAYA MEN RAJYA MANTRI) (SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE) : (a) The total production of rice, wheat and other cereals in West Bengal during 1969-70 was estimated at 68.6 lakh tonnes. Estimates of production during the year 1970-71 will be available only in July or August 1971. It is too early to make any estimate of production during the agricultural year 1971-72 which will commence only in July 1971.

(b)

Year	Quantity procured by FCI in West Bengal
1969-70 (Nov., 69 to Oct., 70)	4.11 lakh tonnes
1970-71 (Nov., 70 to 6.5.71)	2.42 lakh tonnes

It is too early to fix a procurement target for 1971-72.

(c) In the absence of final estimates of production during 1970-71, the rise in production cannot be confirmed. Some seasonal rise in prices of rice during this part of the year is a normal phenomenon. Other factors responsible for the rise in prices this year are :—

- (1) Lower production of Aman rice this year (according to preliminary estimates).
- (2) Serious law and order situation in the State.
- (3) Mid-term election which kept the Distt. Administration and the Police busy.
- (4) Pre-election uncertainty disturbing the market.
- (5) Heavy influx of people from East Bengal.

(d) Supplies of foodgrains from the Central pool to West Bengal have been increased. Larger number of people particularly poorer sections have been brought under modified rationing coverage and progressively greater allotments of rice are being made by the State Government, for deficit districts and deficit pockets of surplus districts. Arrangements have also been made by the State Government, for open market supply of levy free portion of rice mills' production. As a result of all these measures the rice prices in West Bengal have shown a steady to easy trend from the beginning of May, 1971.

Amendments of State Cooperative Acts to Provide Loans for Agricultural and Landless Labourers

583. SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE (KRISHI MANTRI) be pleased to state :

(a) whether the State Cooperative Act at present provides for giving loans to landless peasants, share croppers and agricultural labourers ;

(b) whether this excludes about two-thirds of the rural population from getting any benefits from the Co-operatives and