

financial arrangements. Alternative arrangements have been made for supply of the major portion of the allotment to Assam from ready stocks of Basmati rice held in Food Corporation of India depots in Rajasthan.

Damage of Kharif Crop Due to Rains in Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana and Delhi

6269. PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has assessed the extent of damage caused to the Kharif harvest as a result of heavy rains and floods in Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana and Delhi; and

(b) if so, the remedial measures taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE): (a) and (b). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Increase in Price of Fertilizers and Steps to Supply them at Cheap Rates in Punjab

6270. SHRI TEJA SINGH SWATANTRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the price of fertilizers had been increased a number of times during the last three years;

(b) if so, the reasons for such frequent increase in the prices and its effects on agricultural production; and

(c) the steps being taken to supply cheap fertilizers in Punjab State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE): (a) and (b). The prices of fertilizers were increased twice during the last three years. The reasons for the increase in the prices are as under:—

(i) 1968-69: The prices of imported fertilizers were marginally increased with effect from 1-4-1968 in respect of three fertilizers viz. Amm. Sulphate, Urea and Muriate of Potash to avoid losses to the Central Fertiliser Pool. The percentage increase was—

Amm. Sulphate-2.40, Urea-2.56 and Muriate of Potash-9.00 i.e. Rs. 1/- for Amm. Sulphate, Rs. 2/- for Urea and Rs. 4/- for Muriate of Potash (100 K.G. of fertilizers) which was very nominal.

(ii) 1969-70: In the budget proposals for 1969-70, an excise duty of 10% was levied on fertilizers as a result of which the fertiliser prices were increased with effect from 1-3-69. The increase in prices ranged from 8% to 11% on various fertilizers as compared to the prices prevailing in 1968-69.

On the other hand the prices of fertilizers were reduced marginally in respect of Amm. Sulphate by Rs. 10/- per M.T. w.e.f. 5-8-69, Muriate of Potash by Rs. 10/- per M.T. w.e.f. 1-1-71 and Urea by Rs. 20/- per M.T. w.e.f. 4-3-71. In fact, the price of a particular variety of Amm. Sulphate which is a small farmer's fertiliser was reduced by Rs. 100/- during the year 1969-70.

Some farm management studies have shown that the share of cost of fertilizers in the overall cost of cultivation (cash and kind expenses) ranged from 4.1% to 17.7% which is not high.

As a result of a study made it was found that during the eight years period from 1961-62 to 1968-69, wheat prices rose by 103%, rice prices by 97%, foodgrains prices by 101% and prices of all agricultural commodities including commercial crops by 76%. On the other hand, the price of Ammonium Sulphate rose by 47% and Urea by 29% during the same period.

(c) The prices of fertilizers are generally uniform throughout the country. The question of supply of cheap fertilizers to Punjab State, therefore, does not arise.

Survey for Underground Water Reservoir in Punjab and Expenditure on Construction of such Reservoir

6271. SHRI TEJA SINGH SWATANTRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether survey has been completed in the State of Punjab for underground water in various parts of the State;

(b) if so, the steps being taken to locate