

Medical remedies to victims inhaling poisonous gas near Shahdara

2134. SHRI RAM PRAKASH:
SHRI PRABODH CHANDRA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the residents of Shahdara and Delhi, U.P. border had to inhale poisonous gas on the 27th June, 1973 emitted from burning drums containing phosphorus; and

(b) If so, the medical remedies proposed for the affected persons?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING (SHRI A. K. KISKU):

(a) Government are not aware of any person residing in Shahdara and Delhi-U.P. Border area having been affected by poisonous gas on 27th June, 1973 on account of phosphorus burning.

(b) Does not arise.

Food distribution through Village Service Societies and Primary Marketing Societies

2135. SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government is considering a proposal to give bigger role in food distribution; and

(b) if so, whether all the village service societies and primary marketing societies have been asked to involve themselves in the food distribution machinery and to manage fair prices shops in rural urban areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE): (a) and (b). Foodgrains are already being distributed through a net-work of Fair Price Shops and Co-operative stores throughout the country. One of the salient features of the wholesale trade

take over is that the consumer co-operatives in the rural areas should be utilised for retail distribution to the maximum extent. Since distribution is the responsibility of the State Governments, they have been advised from time to time to improve the working of the fair price shops.

Conference on Role of Agriculture Cooperative Marketing Societies

2136. SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the two-day conference on the role of Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Societies was held in July, 1973; and

(b) if so, how many delegates participated and what decisions were taken in the conference in regard to the role that Cooperative Marketing Societies could play?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE): (a) A Conference on the "Role of Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Societies in procurement and distribution of food-grains" was convened in New Delhi by the National Cooperative Union of India for the 7th and 8th July, 1973. The Conference, however, concluded on the 7th July, 1973, itself, as the entire agenda was discussed and recommendations finalised in one day.

(b) 44 delegates participated in the Conference. The recommendations made by the Conference are given in the attached Statement.

Statement

Recommendations made by the Conference on the "Role of Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Societies in procurement and distribution of food-grains"

The Conference on the "Role of Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Societies in Procurement and Distribu-

tion of Foodgrains" held on 7th July, 1973 reviewed the procurement operations for wheat in various States and expressed satisfaction over the contribution made by Cooperative Agricultural Marketing Societies in the total wheat procurement in the country. The Conference made the following suggestions with a view to enlarging the role of Cooperatives in the wholesale and distributive trade.

1. The Government should declare a long term policy defining permanent role of cooperatives in procurement of foodgrains, so that they may build up necessary wherewithal. Cooperatives should be exclusive agency to make purchases from farmers as agent of F.C.I., States (Food Department) or any other agency. This would avoid unhealthy competition among different purchasing agencies.

2. The procurement prices of various foodgrains should be determined in consultation with the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation and Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Societies of surplus producing States.

3. The Bonus Scheme, announced recently by the Government of India should be extended upto 30th November, 1973.

4. Cooperatives are forced to open purchase Centres where not much arrivals are there. Such Centres are not viable and Cooperatives lose in running them. Such Centres should be subsidised by the Government.

5. The Commercial banks at present insist on 10 to 20 per cent margins while giving loans to cooperatives for purchase of foodgrains. This is unnecessary in view of the purchases being made on behalf of the Government and when loans are given at latter's guarantee. Government should issue directions to nationalised Banks to this effect.

6. The Food Corporation of India takes discriminating decisions in regard to terms and conditions while appointing cooperatives as their agents in different States. It is necessary to prescribe uniform terms and conditions for all States. The Food Corporation of India gives different rates of incidentals to cooperatives. There should be State level committees to decide such rates.

7. The Food Corporation of India should review from time to time its functional relationship with Cooperatives. It should not put such conditions while inviting tenders for various works which unreasonably are to the disadvantage of cooperatives. In case of more than one agency operating for procurement of foodgrains along with Cooperatives, the area for each should be demarcated on long term basis.

8. The F.C.I. and State Governments adopt a policy of pick and choose in appointing cooperatives as their purchasing agents. They should involve cooperative structure as a whole and not a few societies here and there. It is in the interest of F.C.I., Food Departments, to use cooperatives only as this would streamline procurement operations and reduce cost of handling.

9. The Food Corporation of India should deal only with the State Cooperative Marketing Societies and not with Primary Cooperatives.

10. In States where marketing cooperatives are weak National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation should operate for procurement in collaboration with local societies and National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation should be given the same facilities as to State Marketing Societies.

11. The Cooperatives should examine the feasibility of making outright purchases in addition to making monopoly purchase for F.C.I. and Government.

12. In view of prices being fixed for major crops, the scheme of linking of

credit with marketing may be considered for implementation. If Cooperatives function as sole agency for supply of credit and agricultural inputs, linking of credit with marketing can be adopted effectively.

13. Where Cooperatives and other agencies have purchased wheat from farmers, supply of requirements of farmers as producers and consumers at reasonable price should be ensured. The ultimate objective should be to develop an integrated approach viz. supply of inputs, agricultural credit, procurement, storage and distribution within the framework of Cooperative Movement.

14. The Conference took note of the provisions in Cooperatives such laws as in Uttar Pradesh, empowering the Government to change the management of the societies, if Government guaranteed loans given to societies. It is apprehended that loans raised for procurement with Government guarantee may be used by the Government for changing the Board, even when the latter achieved outstanding results in operations. To encourage the Board of Management of cooperatives and to give them fair chance such provisions should be repealed.

15. To give encouragement to farmers, incentives, reward should be given to such farmers who gave their own wheat to cooperatives and worked for procurement drive. Special rewards should be given to such cooperatives in each block and district which procured maximum wheat.

As regards the role of cooperatives in distribution of foodgrains and other essential commodities the Conference made the following observations, suggestions:—

1. Inter-State movement of foodgrains should be done on cooperative to cooperative basis and or through National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation. In this connection it was suggested that since

major quantity of foodgrains procured is for internal consumption itself cooperatives themselves should store foodgrains purchased by them. They may distribute it on the direction of F.C.I./Government. This would avoid un-necessary movement for foodgrains purchased. The cost of procurement and distribution will also be reduced.

2. Transport is one of the bottlenecks in the movement of foodgrains procured by cooperatives. As priority is given to F.C.I., it should also be given to cooperatives.

3. All the fair price shops should be allotted only to Agricultural Marketing Cooperatives and or Consumers Cooperatives. Not only foodgrains, but distribution of all essential commodities, such as Ghee, cloth, oil, sugar, cement, kerosene oil etc. should be entrusted to cooperatives on permanent basis both in the urban and rural areas. Tractor and spare parts, machines, tyres etc. should be supplied to farmer through cooperatives. The National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation should be allowed to import tractors on behalf of farmers and State Federations. It should also be given licence to import fertilizers for Central Pool, pack it according to requirements and supply to farmers. Effective coordination should be established between agricultural marketing cooperatives and consumer cooperatives.

4. Financial assistance in the form of Share Capital contribution, Managerial subsidies, Loans etc. should be provided to village service societies and primary marketing societies in respect of supply of consumers goods including foodgrains on the same pattern as to consumers cooperatives under the centrally sponsored scheme to meet the requirement of consumer stores. Government should give guarantee to Agricultural Marketing Societies and Village Societies for loss on account of undertaking distribution of foodgrains and other essential commodities.

5. While fixing retail prices of foodgrains and other essential commodities

ties consumers cooperatives and other consumers organisations should be consulted.

6. The National Cooperative Union of India should organise a broad based conference on consumers protection in collaboration with N.C.C.F. and other consumers organisations.

The Conference felt that the achievements of Cooperatives are not properly made known to public. All publicity media should be adopted to highlight the achievements of cooperative societies. Prominent cooperators from States where cooperatives have achieved more than 60 per cent of their procurement targets should be invited for discussion on T.V. and All India Radio.

Soil Conservation Schemes during Fifth Plan

2137. SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state

(a) whether the Union Agriculture Ministry has stressed the need for proper drainage facilities in the Fifth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, whether the Planning Commission has provided Rs 45 crores for the soil conservation scheme in the central sector during Fifth Plan,

(c) if so, the main features of the scheme; and

(d) the States to be benefited by this decision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. SHER SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. The importance of proper drainage facilities has been stressed in the Fifth Five Year Plan.

(b) and (c). The Planning Commission has provided Rs. 40 crores for soil conservation scheme under Centrally Sponsored Sector. Under this Scheme it is proposed to intensify the

soil conservation programme in the catchments of 21 River Valley Projects.

(d) The protection of the catchments of these 21 River Valley Projects will benefit directly the States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mysore Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, in which the reservoirs are situated. Indirectly however, the States which obtain power and irrigation supplies from these projects will also benefit because their life will be prolonged.

Houses for the Poor in Tamil Nadu

2138 SHRI R V SWAMINATHAN: Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Tamil Nadu has taken a big leap forward regarding houses for the poor and if so, how far this is true.

(b) which other States have built houses for the poor,

(c) whether the Centre has also helped the State Governments in this regard, and

(d) if so, how many States and what kind of help?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND IN THE MINISTRY OF WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI OM MEHTA): (a) and (b) Almost all the State Governments are implementing various social housing schemes introduced by the Ministry of Works and Housing which are intended to cater to the housing needs of the people falling under lower income brackets. Under the Slum Clearance/Improvement Scheme the Government of Tamil Nadu have achieved good progress. The Tamil Nadu Housing Board have also introduced a scheme known as 'Houses for all through Daily Savings' in collaboration with the Syndicate