

Area and crop grown on Aralam State Farm and procedure for their sale

192. SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the total area now under cultivation in Aralam State Farm in Kerala and the crops being cultivated in the farm;

(b) the mechanism for selling the products in that farm; and

(c) whether Government have received any complaint about the practices of corruption indulged in by the officials of the farm?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE): (a) 3,000 acres were under cultivation at the close of June, 1973. It is expected to complete cultivation on 5,000 acres in kharif '73. Main crops cultivated are:

(i) Plantation crops: Coconut, Arecanut, Cashewnut, Rubber, Pepper and coco etc.

(ii) Field crops: Paddy, pineapple, banana, and redgram.

(iii) Inter crop: Tapioca.

(b) Sale procedure for the products is that the prices of seeds are fixed by the headquarters office of the State Farms Corporation of India Ltd. For non-seed varieties, sales are made by the farm itself, after inviting tenders on open advertisement basis, supplemented by negotiations, if necessary. For perishable commodities like pineapples, bananas or vegetables, sales are made in open market at prevalent prices, in the market. For such sale, a depot has also been opened at Cannore at the suggestion of the District Collector.

(c) No, Sir.

Shortage and high prices of Nitrogenous fertilisers in Maharashtra

193. SHRI ANNASAHEB GOTSHINDE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that sufficient Nitrogenous fertilisers are not easily available to the needy agriculturists in Maharashtra and that they have to buy these fertilisers in open market at exorbitant rates; and

(b) if so, the remedial steps taken to meet the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE):

(a) Due to the overall shortage of Nitrogenous fertilisers in the country there have been constraints in the availability of these fertilisers to farmers in Maharashtra. However, no report about black-marketing in these fertilisers in Maharashtra has been received.

(b) Action can be taken against dealers indulging in black-marketing under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. State Governments who have been given the necessary powers in this regard have been requested to step up their vigilance in respect of the activities of dealers. Efforts are being made to step up fertiliser availability by maximum utilisation of the capacity of the domestic fertiliser units and by augmenting imports of fertilisers to the maximum possible extent.

Effect of 'Mandrax' sold as a sleeping pill

194. SHRI S. C. BESRA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether a drug named "Mandrax" is being sold as a Sleeping Pill;

(b) whether about 3,000 people have been suffering from mental disease by using this drug; and