

additional crops also in the old projects in addition to the command of new irrigation projects.

Plant Protection Measures

1567. **Shri Yashpal Singh:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of the crops to the total produce in a year which came under plant protection measures; and

(b) whether there is any proposal to raise this percentage so as to eliminate the loss of grains?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Shri Shah-nawaz Khan): (a) Approximately 10 per cent. of crops came under plant protection measures in the year 1964-65.

(b) Yes. There is a proposal gradually to intensify plant protection measures. In the last years of the 1st and 2nd Five Year Plans a level of coverage of 6.1 and 16.0 million acres respectively was reached. It is anticipated that a level of coverage of 43 million acres per year will be reached in the last year of the 3rd plan. It is proposed to reach a level of coverage of 210 million acres per year in the 3rd year of the Fourth Plan and to maintain that level for the last two years of the Fourth Plan.

Farm Prices

1568. **Shri Sidheshwar Prasad:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the present farm prices in India are much below international levels;

(b) if so, what are its details; and

(c) how they compared in 1950, 1955 and 1960 respectively?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Shri Shah-nawaz Khan): (a) to (c). It is difficult to give a categorical answer to this question primarily because comparable farm prices are not published by many countries and secondly Indian farm prices are lower than those in some and higher than those in other countries. A comparative statement, for some important countries for which farm prices are available, is laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-1568/65].

National Co-operative Bank

1569. **Shri Himatsingka:**
Shri Rameshwar Tanti:

Will the Minister of Community Development and Co-operation be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under consideration of Government to set up a national co-operative bank; and

(b) if so, when the decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Community Development and Co-operation (Shri B. S. Murthy): (a) and (b). The Ram Niwas Mirdha Committee on Cooperation recommended the setting up of a National Cooperative Bank, which would form the apex of the cooperative financial structure in the country. The Conference of State Ministers of Cooperation held on the 3rd and 4th of November, 1965 which considered the recommendations of the Mirdha Committee recommended that the All India Cooperative Banks' Federation should be requested to study the proposal in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India and the Ministry of Community Development & Cooperation. The matter will be considered further in the light of the study.