

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI D. SANJIVAYYA) : (a) No Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Increase in Rice Production

4139. SHRI D. N. PATODIA : Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that at a Conference of the State Food Ministers, the question of pushing up rice production was considered in detail ;

(b) if so, the details of the discussions held on this issue ; and

(c) whether any specific proposals have emanated as a result of their discussion ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Conference noted with satisfaction the progress made by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research in releasing new varieties such as 'Jaganath' and 'Pankaj' for areas with problems of waterlogging and diseases and 'Jamuna' and 'Sabarmathi' for areas which have preference for fine varieties like 'Basmati'.

The Conference stressed the need for evolving varieties resistant to tungro virus and varieties which will give more rice on hulling. The following steps have been taken on the recommendations of that Conference.

(c) (i) A new high yielding strain (IR. 20) moderately resistant to Tungro virus has been released for areas of Eastern U. P., Bihar and West Bengal where tungro virus is prevalent.

(ii) Five surveillance parties have been set up by the Government of India for making a survey of out break of diseases and pests of rice particularly Tungro virus. Two grain quality and a high yielding strains, CR. 10.5437 and CR. 1-6, with excellent grain quality and a high percentage of head rice have been recommended for release by the Central Sub-Committee for release of varieties.

Price of Good Quality Seeds

4140. SHRI D. N. PATODIA : Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the prices of good quality seeds as prevailing at present is unremuneratively high and is not likely to help accelerate the green revolution ;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken steps to ensure adequate supply of seeds at reasonable reasonable rates to farmers ; and

(c) what has been the price behaviour of the seeds and the causes of such increase ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) : (a) The prices of good quality of seeds are always higher than grain prices because of the much heavier investment in seed production and much greater risk. However, seed is a small input and given good quality seed, a farmer would not regard its price as high because the return on using good seeds is remunerative.

(b) At present, there is no shortage of seeds. The State Governments are responsible for seed production and distribution. Also the National Seeds Corporation has set up a chain of dealers and made available good seeds at reasonable rates throughout the country. Recently, the Tarai Development Corporation has also established a network of seeds distribution. Besides, there is a growing private trade in seeds.

(c) On account of plentiful seed production and keen competition, the prices of seeds have generally shown a downward trend.

Shortage of Small Tractors and their Manufacture

4141. SHRI D. N. PATODIA : Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that small tractors are in short supply in the country ;

(b) if so, the types of tractors, H. P. wise—that are in great demand in the country;

(c) the categories of those which are being manufactured in the country and the extent of short fall under each category ; and