

Import of Trawlers

3250. SHRI D. N. PATODIA : Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether many Indian firms have shown keenness to enter into deep sea fishing;

(b) whether these firms have requested for Government's permission to import foreign trawlers, as the Indian trawlers are not good enough; and

(c) if so, how many requests have been received for import of trawlers and the decision thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE): (a) to (c). Deep sea fishing vessels are now being constructed in the country. As a large number of vessels will be required, it is necessary to develop indigenous capacity for manufacture of vessels. It will not be in the interests of the country to depend entirely on imports. Even if the vessels initially constructed do not come up to the best international standards, improvements can be effected on the basis of experience. At the same time it is necessary to ensure that the immediate needs of the fishing industry are met. In line with this approach, Government had introduced a scheme in 1968 for import of a limited number of deep sea fishing vessels. One of the conditions of the scheme was that one vessel should be constructed indigenously for every two vessels imported. Under this scheme, arrangements are being made to import 30 vessels, linked with construction of 15 vessels indigenously. Twelve parties are participating in this scheme.

Proposals for establishment of deep sea fishing projects in collaboration with foreign parties have since been received from seven parties. These proposals involve import of fishing vessels under collaboration arrangements. As the import of fishing vessels is not permitted

at present, except under the scheme referred to above, these proposals have not been cleared.

The position is, however, being kept under constant review to ensure that an appropriate balance is maintained between the immediate needs of the fishing industry and the need for developing self-sufficiency in the equipment required by the industry.

Plan for Conversion of Rajasthan Desert into Pasture in 12 years

3251. SHRI D. N. PATODIA : Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether according to the reports of experts of the Indian National Science Academy with adequate Central assistance, the arid desert of Rajasthan can be converted into green pasture within a period of 12 years;

(b) whether the above recommendation is based on practical investigations of the experts; and

(c) if so, the details of the recommendations and what steps Government have taken to implement them ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) : (a) No.

The final report of the Study team is yet to be received. The summary of recommendations, however, as obtained includes the following statement:—

“Converting the desert region into green pastures and fields within a generation may appear a dream, but it is within our power to make this dream a reality.”

(b) No.

The recommendations were made by the study team after about 3 week's visit in some of the critical areas of the region covering more than 2,500 km. by road in the Jaisalmer, Barmer, Ganganagar