

Support Price (MSPs) fixed for the two basic varieties of cotton during the last three years are given below :

Year	Basic Variety	MSP fixed by the Govt. (Rs./qtl.)
1995-96	F-414/H-777	1150
	H-4	1350
1996-97	F-414/H-777	1180
	H-4	1380
1997-98	F-414/H-777	1330
	H-4	1530

On the basis of Price differentials of these two basic varieties, the Ministry of Textiles fixes the MSPs for other varieties.

(b) and (c) While recommending the MSPs for cotton, the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) takes into account the cost of production data generated under the Comprehensive Scheme for Studying the Cost of Cultivation of Principal Crops. The latest cost data generated under the scheme are updated by CACP by taking into account the changes in the prices of variable inputs. While recommending the Minimum Support Price, it is also ensured that it covers the cost of production and also provides a margin of profit to give incentive to the farmers for investment in agriculture and adoption of improved technology.

[Translation]

India-Newzealand Collaboration

92. SHRI RAMPAL SINGH :
SHRI ANAND RATNA MAURYA :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether any agreement has been signed between India and Newzealand for collaboration in the field of fruit cultivation;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) and (b) A Memorandum of Agreement was signed on 17th March, 1998 at New Delhi between the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and the Horticulture and Food Research Institute, (Hort Research) of Newzealand for scientific and technical cooperation. The salient features of the MOA are : exchange of scientists and technologists, exchange of germplasm and breeding material; exchange of scientific literature, information and methodology and import and export of scientific equipment as available and required in any programme of common interest as may be mutually agreed upon.

(c) The Agreement shall be effective until either Party serves notice on the other of its intention to terminate it. This MOA will be implemented through development of biennial work plans. The first Work Plan under the MAO for the biennium 1998-1999 has been drafted and sent to Hort Research for approval.

Subsidy on Agricultural Implements

93. SHRI HARI KEWAL PRASAD : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to restore subsidy on agricultural implements and pesticides;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether agricultural production has been adversely affected due to the withdrawal of subsidy;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the remedial steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) to (c) Subsidy on pesticides was withdrawn during the Eighth Plan period under the Integrated Cereal Development Programme for rice, wheat and coarse cereals. This was done to promote eco-friendly Integrated Pest Management (IPM). There is no proposal, at present, for the restoration of this subsidy during Ninth Plan period. The subsidy on agricultural implements has not been withdrawn.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) and (f) Do not arise.

[English]

Fifth Pay Commission

94. SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is resentment amongst various sections of Central Government employees as the recommendations of Fifth Pay Commission are not to their satisfaction;

(b) if so, the details of such sections of the employees, and

(c) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) to (c) Though there is a heavy financial burden on the Government due to the

implementation of the recommendations of Fifth Central Pay Commission, several recommendations of the Pay Commission with substantial financial implications have been implemented by the Government. There are several representations from Employees Associations on various issues relating to pay and related matters.

The recommendations of the Pay Commission in regard to pay scales, allowances, etc. have been implemented in accordance with agreed settlement arrived at with representatives of Staff Side in the National Council (JCM) after detailed discussions over demands submitted by the Staff Side. Other issues covered by the definition of 'anomaly' will be considered by the Anomalies Committees at National/ Departmental levels.

[Translation]

Portable Chulhas

95. SHRI PANKAJ CHOUDHRY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to withdraw subsidy on portable chulhas;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor; and

(c) the date by which it is likely to be made effective?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) to (c) No, Sir. Under the Central Sector Scheme "National Programme on Improved Chulhas," the subsidy on portable improved chulhas is being continued only for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and also in North Eastern Region States, Sikkim, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshwadeep and notified desert and hilly areas during the year 1998-99.

[English]

Shukla Commission

96. SHRI NRIPEN GOSWAMI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether High Level Commission of the North-East, headed by Shri S.P. Shukla had submitted its reports during March 7, 1997;

(b) if so, the main recommendations accepted by the Government; and

(c) the progress made in the implementation of other recommendations concerning Central Ministries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) to (c) The High Level Commission (HLC) for the North East headed by Shri S.P. Shukla, the then Member, Planning Commission submitted its report to the then Prime Minister on March 7, 1997. The HLC critically examined the backlog in Basic Minimum Services (BMS) and gaps in infrastructure development such as Power, Communications, Irrigation, Flood Control etc. and recommended policy initiatives and programmes to bridge these gaps and rejuvenate local economy along with measures for institutional reforms, additional resources mobilisation and effecting public participation in development activities. The HLC also estimated total cost for providing BMS to the North Eastern States and indicative requirement of funds for infrastructure development in the Ninth Five Year Plan. A decision was taken, in principle, in December, 1997 for creation of a Central Pool of Resources for implementation of various recommendations contained in the report of the High Level Commission. It was also noted that the creation of Central Pool of Resources for North East would require approval of the Parliament and would therefore have to await the constitution of the 12th Lok Sabha. Necessary steps have been taken to propose the openings of Budget head for creation of Central Pool of resources for funding the specific projects in the North Eastern States and Sikkim in the Central Government's budget proposals for the year 1998-99.

Missile Race

97. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "US ponders curbs against India and Pak" appearing in 'Hindustan Times' on May 4, 1998;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether India has clearly stated that it will not come under pressure of any third country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) India has been consistently opposed to unilateral and discriminatory technology controls regimes. This has been made known to all the countries participating in such regimes including the United States. Government will continue to promote the development of indigenous technological capability and to take all steps in order to ensure national security.