

*[English]***Loss of Lives of Fishermen**

544. SHRI D.S. AHIRE:

SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that more than 200 fishermen have lost their lives in a cyclonic storm that has been raging over the Arabian Sea on October 16, 1998;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any compensation has since been paid in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) No report on loss of life of fishermen has been received from the Governments of Gujarat and Maharashtra due to the cyclonic storm of October 16, 1998.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

**Policy on Crop Patterns**

545. SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE:

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to formulate a policy on 'crop patterns' as part of the macro/micro planning of agriculture for the various parts of the country;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to constitute an 'Expert Panel' for this purpose; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) Macro/Micro planning of agriculture envisages regionally differentiated strategy based on agroclimatic conditions for agriculture development. This includes optimisation of crop patterns and promotion of suitable efficient cropping systems for different zones. Accordingly, ICAR have identified 30 important cropping systems in the country.

(b) There is no proposal under consideration to constitute an 'Expert Panel' on the crop patterns.

(c) Does not arise.

**Coconut Farming**

546. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to assist the Government of Gujarat to implement the project for the development of Coconut Farming; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) For developing Coconut Cultivation in Gujarat, Government of India is implementing an area expansion project through Coconut Development Board under which assistance is provided to the farmers @ Rs. 6,000 per hectare. For this project, during 8th plan Rs. 7.28 lakhs were provided to Government of Gujarat. For the year 1998-99 an allocation of Rs. 2.5 lakhs has been made for covering an area of 80 hectares under Coconut in Gujarat.

**Action Plan**

547. SHRI CHADA SURESH REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any Action Plan is under consideration of the Union Government to make India hunger free; and

(b) if so, the target set up to achieve the plan and the details of the operational strategy?

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 (b) A Special Action Plan (SAP) has been prepared by the Government for doubling food production and making India hunger free in 10 years. The agriculture development strategy envisaged in the SAP has been consciously interwoven with the country's food security concern. The SAP defines the scope of food production (to include not only foodgrains i.e. rice, wheat, coarse cereals and pulses but also all major food items including edible oils, sugar, fruits and vegetables, livestock products like milk, egg and meat and fish) and spells out detailed strategy and specific programmes to increase the supply of various food items in such a way that the demand for these items for the entire population is comfortably met and some exportable surplus also become available. A three pronged strategy, namely, (i) increase in overall employment/income by raising farm productivity; (ii) provision of gainful supplementary employment through poverty alleviation schemes such as Jawahar Rozgar Yojana, Employment Assurance Scheme; and (iii) distribution of foodgrains through PDS at concessional prices to the poor has been chalked out to increase the purchasing power of the poor to enable to have access to basic food items.

*[Translation]***Development Scheme for Betel Leaf**

548. SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government are implementing the Regional Betel Leaf Development Scheme in various States particularly in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;