

intensive pest control measures, model demonstrations besides training of farmers. The outlay for the Scheme during the VIIIth Five Year Plan period was Rs. 5800 lakhs. The scheme was continued during 1997-98 with an outlay of Rs. 1600 lakhs and is being continued during 1998-99 with an outlay of Rs. 2000 lakhs.

(d) An assistance of Rs. 671.381 lakhs was provided to Government of Kerala during the period 1992-93 to 1997-98 under the Scheme. The outlay for Kerala during 1998-99 is Rs. 89.30 lakhs.

Extension to Monopoly Cotton Procurement Scheme

3246. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have given extensions to Maharashtra's Monopoly Cotton Procurement Scheme upto year ending 30.06.99 with clear indication that the scheme would not be given further extension;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have received a proposal for extension of scheme for the next 10 years for the benefit of farmers; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto and the details of the final decision in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA): (a) to (d) The Government of Maharashtra sent proposals to the Government of India, for the extension of the Monopoly Procurement Scheme for Raw Cotton in Maharashtra for a further period of 10 years beyond June, 1998. such proposals including possible benefits to the growers through such extension.

The Government of India approved the continuation of Monopoly Procurement Scheme for raw cotton in Maharashtra, taking into account all relevant factors, for a further period of one year i.e., till 30.06.1999. It was stipulated by the Government of India that there would be no financial commitment on the part of Government of India and that, in the event of cotton prices falling below Minimum Support Prices (MSP) levels, no purchases of cotton would be made by the Cotton Corporation of India in Maharashtra during this period and that Government of Maharashtra was required to take effective steps in the meanwhile to discontinue the Monopoly Procurement Scheme of Raw Cotton with effect from 30.06.1999.

Regarding Fifth Pay Commission

3247. SHRI P. SANKARAN:
SHRI MITRASEN YADAV:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any demand to increase the pay scales of Assistants and UDCs of the Central Government employees;

(b) whether there is also demand for the increase of transport allowance paid to the Central Govt. employees from Rs 100 per month to Rs. 400 per month at the minimum;

(c) if so, the reasons for non-settlement of these two long pending demands of the Central Government employees; and

(d) the alternative package proposed to be offered?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) The demands are under consideration of Government in consultation with the nodal Ministries and Departments. Appropriate decisions will be taken having due regard to the likely repercussions in other sectors of Government, the administrative and financial implications, etc.

[Translation]

Import of Agricultural Products from America

3248. SHRI JANARDAN PRASAD MISRA:
SHRI M.R. CHAUDHARI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the agricultural items especially Soyabean imported from America are of sub-standard quality;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to conduct quality test of those;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?