

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SOMPAL) :

(a) The National Commission on Agriculture had in general recommended adoption of crop rotation for increasing the production of crops.

(b) and (c) The Government has been following the approach of crop rotations in the crop development programmes. These programmes have been modified from time to time as per research recommendations suited to different situations. Presently the crop based programmes are being implemented on cropping system approach basis which ensures adoption of proper crop rotations in the system.

[English]

P. M. Visit to Pakistan

*302. SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL :

SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Prime Minister during his recent visit to Lahore had discussed several issues with the Pakistan Prime Minister;

(b) if so, the details of the issues discussed and agreement signed between the two countries;

(c) the contents of the Lahore Declaration;

(d) the reaction of USA, UK, Japan and other countries to the declaration; and

(e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to give impetus to the agreements signed with Pakistan?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH) : (a) to (e) The Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, visited Pakistan on the inaugural run of the Delhi-Lahore-Delhi bus service on 20-21 February 1999. During his visit, the Prime Minister conveyed to the Government and people of Pakistan India's deep desire for peace and friendship with them and to develop a stable and comprehensive structure of cooperation for the benefit of the two peoples.

Prime Minister's discussions with the Pakistan Prime Minister were wide-ranging, covering the entire range of bilateral relations, regional cooperation within SAARC and issues of international concern. Prime Minister empha-

sised that the peoples of the two countries desire lasting peace and an environment where their security, progress and prosperity can be assured. For this purpose, he conveyed that it was essential that the forces of violence and terrorism be combated and the hands of the advocates of harmony, balance and realism be strengthened for the development of good neighbourly relations between the two countries.

Prime Minister and the Prime Minister of Pakistan signed the Lahore Declaration on 21 February 1999. The Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan also signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Confidence Building Measures. A Joint Statement was also issued at the conclusion of the visit. The triad of documents aims at moving the relationship forward across a broad front by building trust and confidence, exploring avenues of mutually beneficial cooperation and addressing outstanding issues. It is noteworthy that in both the Lahore Declaration and the Memorandum of Understanding, India and Pakistan have reaffirmed their determination to implementing the Simla Agreement in letter and spirit. The Simla Agreement remains the cornerstone for the conduct of bilateral relations between India and Pakistan.

In the Lahore Declaration, the Prime Ministers have agreed that the two countries will intensify efforts to resolve all issues, including the issue of Jammu & Kashmir, through the composite dialogue process; refrain from intervention and interference in each other's internal affairs; combat the menace of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations; protect human rights; take immediate steps to reduce the risk of accidental or unauthorised use of nuclear weapons and to discuss security concepts and doctrines with a view to elaborating measures for confidence building in the nuclear and conventional fields, aimed at prevention of conflict; and reaffirm their commitment to the objectives of SAARC and to work towards the realisation of the SAARC vision for the year 2000 and beyond with a view to promoting the welfare of the peoples of their countries.

The Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Foreign Secretaries contains details of the confidence building measures that the two countries intend to put into place. It has been agreed that, where required, the technical details of these measures will be worked out by experts of the two sides in meetings to be held on mutually agreed dates before mid-1999 with a view to reaching bilateral agreements.

In the Joint Statement issued on 21 February 1999, it was also decided that the two Foreign Ministers would meet periodically to discuss all issues of mutual concern, that the two sides would undertake consultations on WTO related issues with a view to coordinating their respective positions and also that they would determine areas of cooperation in information technology, in particular, for tackling the problem of Y2K. In addition, the two sides

also decided to hold consultations with a view to further liberalising the visa and travel regimes and to appoint a two-member committee at Ministerial level to examine humanitarian issues relating to civilian detainees and missing PoWs.

Various humanitarian issues have already been taken up during a meeting held at the official level on 5-6 March 1999 in Islamabad. As a result of these talks, it was agreed that India would release 43 Pakistani civilian prisoners and Pakistan would release 18 Indian civilian prisoners within three weeks. The two sides also finalized a draft mechanism on improved procedures for handling civilian prisoners for submission to the Ministerial Committee. Issues relating to fishermen, visa procedures and PoWs were also touched upon during these discussions. It is Government's earnest hope to build on the opportunities that are available on account of the Prime Minister's historic initiative. Government intend to seriously implement the understandings contained in the various documents agreed upon during the Summit and expect that the Government of Pakistan will reciprocate.

The international community, including the Governments of USA and Japan, has warmly welcomed the historic initiative taken by the Prime Minister, as also the Lahore Declaration, the Memorandum of Understanding and the Joint Statement.

Spurious Seeds

*303. SHRIMATI LAKSHMI PANABAKA :

SHRI M. BAGA REDDY :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the farmers are being supplied inferior quality of seeds;

(b) whether the cotton seeds, onion seeds and now chilli seeds have been found defective and have affected the crop yield;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the stern measures taken by the Union Government to check the sale of spurious seeds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SOMPAL) :
(a) Yes, Sir. Some instances of supply of inferior quality seeds have been reported.

(b) and (c) The Government of Andhra Pradesh reported that cotton cultivars, viz. Navratna, Moti, Manik, Ajeet-II, White Gold and Bio-seed-6569 have not performed well under certain field conditions like water-logging due to excessive rains in Warangal and Guntur Districts and have affected the crop yield in 37,762 acres

and 1,500 acres respectively. Onion seeds distributed by Andhra Pradesh State Seed Development Corporation (APSSDC) for 200 acres were found defective and the seeds have been replaced. No report has been received about supply of defective Chilli seeds from any State.

(d) Seeds Act, 1966 and Seeds (Control) Order, 1983 are the two legal instruments to check the sale of spurious seeds.

In order to ensure availability of quality seeds to farmers, seed has been declared as an essential commodity under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.

The responsibility of Seed Law Enforcement is vested with the State Governments. Seed Inspectors notified under relevant provisions are authorised to draw samples from seed sellers. Action is taken against the sellers of sub-standard seeds as per the provisions specified in the Seeds Act and Seeds (Control) Order.

Crop Insurance Scheme

*304. SHRI HARIN PATHAK :

SHRI H. P. SINGH :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to make it compulsory for farmers to insure their groundnut crops;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the farmers who have taken loan from banks are only to be covered under crop insurance scheme; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Under the Comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme (CCIS), now under implementation in the country, insurance cover is available only to farmers availing the loan facility from the financial institutions. Under the Modified Comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme (MCCIS) proposed to be introduced, non-loanee farmers are also intended to be covered on an optional basis.

Bus Service to China

*305. SHRI SATYA PAL JAIN :

SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK :