

Integrated Cereals Development Programme in Rice Based Cropping Systems Areas (ICDP-Rice). Under the scheme, incentives are being provided to the farmers for the use of critical inputs like seeds of high yielding varieties/hybrids, improved farm implements including power tillers & sprinklers, soil ameliorants, green manure seeds etc. to motivate them to adopt improved crop production technologies. Besides, for effective transfer of newly developed technology, incentives are also being provided for organisation of field demonstrations and farmers trainings. These incentives are primarily focused on increasing productivity in low productivity areas.

The Government of India have under their consideration, a programme for ground water exploitation in Eastern region of the country during IX Five Year Plan.

[Translation]

Area under Cultivation

3178. KUMARI UMA BHARATI : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of the agricultural land out of the total land in the country;

(b) the percentage of total agricultural land under cultivation in the country;

(c) whether the percentage of the agricultural land under cultivation is quite low, and if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Government have formulated a scheme to bring more agricultural land under cultivation; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : (a) to (c) As per land use statistics, 1994-96 (latest), the percentage of cultivated land (net area sown and current fallows) to the total reporting area in the country is 51.2%. The net sown area constitute 46.8% of the total reporting

area. This percentage is significantly higher than most of the countries.

(d) and (e) The Government is implementing the following schemes to bring more agricultural land under cultivation:

- (i) Centrally sponsored scheme for Reclamation of Alkali (Usar) Soils;
- (ii) Uttar Pradesh Sodic Land Reclamation Project with World Bank Assistance; and
- (iii) EEC assisted project for Reclamation and Development of Alkali Soils in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

[English]

Protection of Panthers

3179. SHRI PARASRAM BHARDWAJ : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey has been conducted regarding population of the Panthers in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the date on which the last survey was conducted;

(c) whether the Government have taken measures to protect the Panthers;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The survey of Panthers on All India basis is done once in 4-5 years. The last complete survey was done in 1993 and the details are given in the Statement-I attached.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The measures taken by the Government to protect the Panthers are given in Statement-II attached.

(e) Does not arise.