

*[Translation]***National Water Policy**

3144. DR. PRABHA THAKUR :
SHRI C.P.M. GIRIYAPPA :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to formulate an effective policy by taking over the subject of various rivers of State Governments to provide relief to the States facing water crisis;

(b) if so, the outline 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) No. Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

*[English]***Fishing by Foreign Vessels**

3145. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government are aware that foreign vessels in the name of joint venture with the Indian collaboration are sweeping the entire bottom of the sea thus adversely affecting the fish catches of the traditional and small mechanised fishermen in Kerala; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken to protect the interests of traditional fishermen?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) and (b) Under the New Deep Sea Fishing Policy of 1991, permissions were given to Indian companies for operation of deep sea fishing vessels in Indian waters under Joint Venture, Test Fishing and Leasing. However, the Deep Sea fishing Policy 1991 has now been rescinded. Presently none of the deep sea fishing vessels operating with valid permits under Joint Venture/Test Fishing/Leasing are operating from Kochin.

Prices of Banana

3146. DR. ULHAS VASUDEO PATIL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the prices of banana vary from Rs. 125/- to Rs. 600/- per quintal in every season of banana;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government propose to declare minimum support price for banana on the basis of inputs required;

(d) whether the Government propose to set up banana based food processing units in banana growing areas;

(e) if so, the details of the matter likely to be considered;

(f) whether the export of banana has been initiated through National Agriculture Co-operative Markets Federation (NAFED); and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) and (b) The prices of banana vary from season to season, place to place and variety to variety. As per the available information, the wholesale prices of banana were ruling in the range of Rs. 232 in Patna to Rs. 738 per qtl. in Shimla in December, 1997.

(c) Under the existing price policy, major agricultural commodities are covered under the Minimum Support Prices (MSP). The horticultural products including banana which have localised production or are perishable in nature, are covered under another scheme called Market Intervention Scheme (MIS), which is implemented on the request of the concerned State Govt. willing to bear 50% of the losses, if any. There is no proposal to bring banana under MSP.

(d) and (e) Government of India generally does not set up any unit directly in any State for processing of various horticultural products including banana. However, financial assistance under the Plan schemes in the form of soft loan and grant is provided to cooperatives, non-governmental organisations, public sector undertakings, private industries and research institutions etc. for the development of processed food sector.

(f) and (g) National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED) is undertaking marketing of fresh fruits and vegetables in the domestic as also export markets which include items such as apple, mango, kinnow, grapes, etc. among fruits; and onion, potato and garlic among vegetables. However, NAFED has not taken up marketing and export of banana as yet. The technology for maintaining its quality in fresh form has not yet been perfected in India for export to distant destinations through sea voyage for longer durations. The production of banana ,

of specific size and numbers of fingers in a bunch free from spots at the time of ripening which are in demand in overseas markets is also not adequately developed.

Food Processing Units in Rural Areas

3147. SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether to encourage farmers to set up food processing units in rural areas, any incentives are given by the Government; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and steps taken to protect the interest of farmers particularly in hilly areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) and (b) Under the Plan Schemes of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, financial assistance in the form of very soft loan and grant is provided to Cooperatives, NGOs, PSUs and Private Sector industries etc. for setting up of food processing units anywhere in the country including rural areas. Enhanced financial assistance is provided in respect of projects to be set up in "difficult areas" which include, hilly states like J&K, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim and North Eastern States, as also the Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshdweep Islands an Integrated Tribal Development Project (IIDP) Areas. The advertisement put out recently by the Ministry indicates area of plan support by the Ministry. The range of projects and types of activities for which the Ministry is providing grant or very soft loan at 4% interest cover practically all aspects of food processing industries.

The above initiatives apart the Ministry has also been operating since 1992-93, a scheme for the setting up and supporting of Food Processing and Training Centres (FPTCs) with strong focus on the rural areas.

FPTCs aim at development of rural entrepreneurship and transfer of technology for processing of food products by utilising locally grown raw materials and providing "hands on" experience at such Centres. Grant is provided to the centres in the following manner:

(i) For single product line (for any group of processing activities)	Upto Rs. 2 lakhs for capital cost and upto Rs. 1 lakh as revolving seed capital.
(ii) Multiproduct line (for more than one group of processing activities)	Upto Rs. 7.50 lakhs for fixed capital cost and upto Rs. 2 lakhs as revolving seed capital.

(iii) For training the trainers at recognised institutes such as CFTRI, Mysore.	Upto Rs. 0.50 lakh one time assistance, subject to actuals as TA/DA etc.
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In addition, the Ministry encourages the concept of backward linkages between farmers and food processors, which inter-alia ensure a secure market for the whole produce of the contracted farmers at pre-determined price on the one hand and assured quantity, quality, delivery & price of raw material for the food processing companies on the other. Such encouragement take the form of grants by way of reimbursement to the extent of 5% of the total purchases made by the processor in a given year, limited to Rs. 10.00 lakhs per year for a maximum period of three years.

Agro-processing Projects

3148. SHRI GORDHANBHAI JAVIA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of schemes implemented by National Co-operative Development Corporation (NCDC) and credit approved/released for various Agro-processing Projects in Co-operative sector during 1998-99, State-wise alongwith the projects financed during preceding two years for Gujarat; and

(b) the detail of funds approved for co-operative venture and also the proposals awaiting clearance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) The details of schemes assisted by the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) are given in the enclosed statement-I. The State-wise details of credit approved/released by NCDC for various Agro-processing projects in cooperative sector during 1998-99 (upto 30.6.1998) are given in enclosed statement-II. The details of the financial assistance provided by NCDC under various schemes during 1996-97 and 1997-98 for the State of Gujarat are given at the enclosed statement-III.

(b) The details of funds approved/released by NCDC during 1997-98 and cumulative upto 31.3.1998 for cooperative ventures are given in the enclosed statement-IV. The number of proposals duly recommended by the State Governments which are awaiting clearance by the NCDC is 104 as on 30th June, 1998. The details are given in the enclosed statement-V.