

addition to loanee farmers has been formulated during the year 1997-98; and

(b) if so, the details of the scheme mooted and the total number of States in which the scheme was implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government of India formulated an Experimental Crop Insurance Scheme (ECIS) for implementation in 24 selected districts of 8 States from Rabi 1997-98 season. The features of the ECIS are as under:—

- (i) It covers loanee as well as non-loanee small and marginal farmers.
- (ii) 100% subsidy in premium for small and marginal farmers.
- (iii) Premium and claims are shared between the Central Government and the State Governments in the ratio of 8 : 2.
- (iv) The scheme is to be implemented, as far as possible, over a smaller unit area preferably a Gram Panchayat.
- (v) Other features are identical to the Comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme (CCIS).

ECIS was implemented in 5 States during Rabi 1997-98.

[*Translation*]

Nuclear Tests

4136. SHRI PANKAJ CHOUDHARY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Pakistan has made an offer to India to sign the treaty regarding not conducting any nuclear test;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) On 11th June 1998 Pakistan while announcing

moratorium on further nuclear testing offered to sign a bilateral test ban agreement with India.

(c) It has been India's consistent position that issues related to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation cannot be limited to an arbitrarily defined geographical sub-region when nuclear weapons by definition have a global reach and impact and India's security concerns extend well beyond that sub-region. Therefore proposals for a bilateral test ban treaty in South Asia are not practical. This is also redundant as India has announced a voluntary moratorium on further testing and is exploring ways and means to convert it into a de jure formulation. India, however, remains fully committed to sustained and constructive dialogue with Pakistan and has offered concrete proposals like the no-first use agreement.

Support Price for Cash Crops

4137. SHRI NARENDRA BUDANIA:
SHRI SURESH CHANDEL:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have failed to announce the support price of cash crops on account of which the farmers have suffered a heavy loss;

(b) if so, the support price of each cash crop likely to be announced immediately; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (c) No, Sir. The Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for commercial crops, viz. Oilseeds, fibres, sugarcane, tobacco and copra covered under the price support scheme have been announced for 1997-98 season. The MSP for jute for 1998-99 has also been announced.

The horticulture crops and spices that have localised production or are perishable in nature, are covered under another scheme viz. the market intervention scheme which is implemented on the request of the concerned State Government willing to bear 50% of the losses, if any.

[*English*]

Disarmament Stand

4138. SHRI M. RAJIAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state: