

(b) We are aware of consistent outside support to Pakistan in this field despite the existence of multilateral export control regimes, unilateral declarations of restraint and supply restrictions in producer countries.

(c) Pakistan's clandestine nuclear weapons programme and its linkage with terrorism has been highlighted and our security concerns emanating from such covert activities have been conveyed bilaterally to several countries and raised in various fora. Government remains fully committed to taking all necessary steps to effectively safeguard India's security and national interests.

Agriculture Credit

2242. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Governments have urged the Union Government to create a Central Fund to enable the States to increase the quantum of agricultural credit and contain the rate of interest at reasonable level;

(b) if so, whether the Union Government have accepted the proposal;

(c) if not, the time by which the Government are likely to take decision on the said proposal;

(d) whether the lack of funds in the States affected the welfare measures of the agriculture sector; and

(e) if so, the remedial measures Government propose to take?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) No request has been received from the State Governments for creation of Central Fund for increasing the quantum of agricultural credit and containing the rate of interest at reasonable level.

(b) to (e) Does not arise.

Production of Fish

2243. SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have identified the States where fish production has declined during Eighth Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to increase the fish production during the Ninth Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) There has been no decline in fish production in any state during the Eighth Plan period. However, minor fluctuations in fish production

have been observed in the states of Goa, Himachal Pradesh and Mizoram during Plan Period.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) Steps have been taken by the Government of India to increase production of fish and other marine products as well as the productivity of fishermen and fishing industry. These steps inter alia include expansion of aquaculture in fresh and brackish waters, development of coastal marine fisheries, construction of requisite infrastructure such as fishery harbours and fish landing centres and development of human resources. A number of central sector and centrally sponsored schemes are being implemented for the development of fisheries and aquaculture in the States/Union Territories.

Digging of Wells

2244. SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK :
SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADODA MANDALIK :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether digging of wells has been undertaken by the Central Ground Water Board during 1997-98;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and location-wise;

(c) whether some locations have been selected for drilling of bore holes in Karnataka during 1998-99;

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and location-wise;

(e) the criterion laid down by the Central Ground Water Board to select the location for drilling bore holes; and

(f) the time by which the bore holes work is likely to be started in the States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Details of wells drilled by the Central Ground Water Board during 1997-98 are given in the Statement-I.

(c) and (d) The Central Ground Water Board has fixed a tentative target of drilling 978 wells in various parts of the country, including 103 wells in the State of Karnataka, during 1998-99 as per details given in Statement-II. Actual locations of wells depend on the requests of the State Government, results of the studies of remote sensing, geophysical survey and hydrogeological mapping.

(e) The criteria for selection of locations for drilling boreholes by the Central Ground Water Board include the need for ascertaining the availability, quality and quantity of ground water, requests of the State