



[Sh. Jujhar Singh]

ture. The Centre and the States are eager to help in the fulfilment of this objective by supplying fertilizer, insecticides, seeds and other inputs. For the first time, the Indian farmer has become receptive to new ideas. In such a conducive atmosphere for the growth of agriculture, we need to overcome our shortcomings as soon as possible.

The breakthrough achieved in the development of seeds and agricultural production is restricted only to wheat and rice. Expected development in other areas has not come about. Even in the case of wheat and rice, we have been unable to match production levels achieved by other countries. Some days back, people were expressing satisfaction in the House that we have achieved the set targets. I have already quoted the related figures but will do so again for the sake of record. Yield of wheat in:-

Ireland is 54,291 Kg per hectare,

In Denmark it is 7,095 Kg per hectare

In Netherlands it is 6,777 Kg per hectare.

In comparison, production in India is 1,848 Kg per hectare which is just 1/3rd or 1/4 th as compared to these countries.

Similarly, in the case of rice the yield is:-

Korea : 6,235 Kg per hectare

North Korea: 6,187 Kg per hectare

Japan : 6,224 Kg per hectare

In India it is 2,025 Kg per hectare which is 1/3rd of top ranking countries like Japan

Why does India have a target of only average production as compared to other

countries despite a healthy environment for development of agriculture? What can be done to match the production levels of countries like China who achieved independence almost at the same time? New techniques developed in laboratories should be transferred to the farmers so that they can make use of them in raising agricultural productivity.

The target till the end of the Seventh Five Year Plan was 189 million tonnes. Satisfaction was expressed that production level of 17 crore tonnes would be achieved. But this is still short by 19 million tonnes

There is no reason to be complacent. The quality of foodgrains which we eat is substandard. Instead of being content with two square meals a day we should look forward to improving the quality of the foodgrain we produce. People who used to eat 'jowar' have now switched over to wheat although the quality of wheat is not up to the mark.

We have not made much of headway in the field of oilseeds and pulses. These crops are grown on dryland. Only 40% out of a total of 70% dryland has been utilised for production of these crops. Many schemes have been introduced for dry-land development, but their implementation is not satisfactory. The marginal increase has been 7.5%. Last year the production of pulses was 11 million tonnes as against a demand of 18 million tonnes. In 1988 about 10 million tonnes of pulses were imported. Till now 7.7 million tonnes have been imported in 1989. The Government should encourage farmers to make full use of the facilities available to them to increase productivity

Within 15 days of the harvesting of mustard seed crop its prices crashed steeply. Only recently has the Government started buying this crop in my constituency, Kota. No sooner did the Government bought the crop, than its price began to rise. But the tendency of the market is such that businessmen start exploiting farmers at the first given opportunity.

[English]

By the time you come into the market enough exploitation has already taken place. Why should you not be ready to take steps immediately when the stocks start coming to the markets?

[Translation]

But this does not happen. The small farmer does not have the capacity to hold back his stock and sells it at low price. Fixing a support price is not enough. Steps should be taken to ensure that the produce arriving in the market before fixation of the support price is not sold off in the distress sale.

Another important thing is that the entire land should be put to optimum use. Being a farmer yourself, you are aware that 70% of our land is getting eroded. Departments have been specially set up to check this. They would be sending favourable reports regularly. I am a farmer myself. Based on personal experience, I can say that our land has not been put to optimum use till now. Soil erosion is one of the major problems facing us. My constituency is in Rajasthan and a large area of the State is covered by desert. But so far as the area which I represent, particularly Kota division and Jhalawan Parliamentary constituency is concerned, water is available in plenty. If soil erosion is not checked over there, the rate of erosion will further of increase.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to submit that no efforts have been made so far to ensure that marginal land is not spared for allotment. The Government has adopted a simple formula of distributing waste land to the landless but nobody bothers to see how these allottees use such land. In our country, wasteland falls under the category of marginal land. The marginal land adjoining the river banks has been shown as waste land in the land records and is being recklessly allotted for cultivation purposes. The areas where there are ravines, gradients or glacis have been entered in the records as waste land and allotments are being made on that

basis. During the last 30 to 40 years all such land was treated as the waste land and has been allotted for farming a a result of which the rate of erosion has increased considerably and productivity has declined accordingly. It is my humble submission that the Government should have a clear cut policy about land use and it should determine as to which land should be used for what purposes. It is alright to allot land to the landless but marginal land should not be allotted and used for farming. Instead it should be used for tree-plantation, orchards etc. so that the roots hold the soil together and help in checking the soil erosion. Perhaps these trees will take 4 or 5 years to mature but finally they will prove more profitable than crop cultivation. Although the Department of Agriculture has accepted this proposal, its implementation is not taking place. I would like to submit that the Government should pay more attention to ensure proper land use and see that land is used for the particular purpose for which it has been allotted.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, so far as the figures are concerned, 998.76 lakh hectares of land has been affected by erosion and out of which only 172.65 lakh hectares of land is in Rajasthan. From these figures it can be seen that the majority of the area affected by water erosion that is nearly 60 per cent of it, is in my State. Here also, it is my constituency which is worst affected in this regard. I would like the Government to take some concrete steps in this direction. Whenever some such matter is raised regarding Rajasthan either by us or on behalf of the Rajasthan Government, it always relates to desert area problems and no attention is paid to the problem of soil erosion whereas it has been a major problem during the last 40 years. Therefore, the Government should kindly pay special attention to it.

Certain people of my State are considered to be agricultural experts such as Shri D.D. Vohra who expresses his views on this problem quite frequently. As for his estimation, about 30 to 50 million hectares of top soil is washed away every year and fertility of the land is lost. I do not want to go into the

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long term adverse effects of this problem but according to his estimation, we have to incur an annual loss of Rs. 4 1/2 or Rs. 7 1/2 crores due to the washing away of the top soil. These figures relate to the whole country. This problem is most serious in my constituency which despite being a small area has many rivers flowing by and where nearly the entire land is situated near the river banks or along the canals and is wasteland. I agree with whatever Shri Vohra has stated on the basis of his experience and I would like to submit that special attention should be paid to this problem.

I would like to make one point more. At the time of independence, 75 per cent of our population was dependent on agriculture or on allied activities. At that time about 25 crores of people were engaged in agriculture and today even after the passage of 40 years, 75 per cent of our people are still engaged in agriculture and allied activities. 75 per cent of the present population would mean 53 to 55 crores. Thus, the number of people dependent on agriculture has increased but the area under cultivation has remained the same. The land which supported 25 crores of people earlier has to bear the pressure of 53 to 55 crore people today and no steps have been taken to divert people from agriculture to other occupations.

Perhaps you want to keep such major section of the population depend on agriculture permanently. So far proper diversification has been taken place in the agriculture related activities such as dairy, poultry, pig-gery and fisheries. Therefore it is very essential to set up industries in the rural areas and divert people from agriculture. In case of some lacuna here, at least the items which are directly related to your Department.

*(Interruptions)*

A very important issue which is often under discussion relates to land ceiling and its implementation. Its one aspect is brought

to your notice but the other one is not. I think that aspect will be unpleasant for many people because in the matter of fixation and implementation of land ceiling there has been a great discrimination. First of all in Rajasthan, land ceiling has been fixed on the basis of agricultural produce. The hon. Minister will be surprised to know that if a farmer produces 200 maunds or more than 60 quintals of yield his land is covered under land ceiling and he is liable to be deprived of his land. Is there any such law in other any country of the world under which attempts have been made to restrict the production and thereafter to implement it strictly. Hence, to fix a ceiling on the basis of agricultural production is to check the initiative of the farmers and to discourage them from having more production. Secondly, as regards the areas where production is more than 60 quintals, I want to inform the hon. Minister that the Settlement Department is one for the whole country. The Settlement Department has classified land into 3 categories namely Barani-1, Barani-2, and First Class. There is discrimination in the matter of land ceiling although there is uniform rent, rate, quality, quantity of produce and the same Department to classify the land. For the same type of land, somewhere ceiling is fixed at 70 acres and elsewhere at 30 acres for those areas that do not have the support of any important person. Various reasons are given for covering such land under land-ceiling laws but the Government is basically doing injustice here and which it has admitted after an examination was conducted into the matter that there has been a unfair treatment and injustice here. It seems as if the Government has not enough courage to remedy this situation. When Shri Bhajan Lal was not the Minister of Agriculture, I had raised this matter in the meeting of the Consultative Committee on agriculture. The facts and figures were brought from Rajasthan and it was admitted that there has been discrimination in the matter of fixation of land ceiling and injustice and been done with some particular area.

So far as the amount of compensation is concerned, the Government intends to pay

only Rs. 30 per bigha as compensation whereas the same land is being sold otherwise at Rs. 10,000. On one hand, those poor people are being exploited by being deprived of their land and on the other, the Government is prepared to pay compensation only at the rate of Rs. 30. In Delhi, the cost of 1 bigha is perhaps Rs. 2 lakhs but the Government wishes to pay compensation only at the rate of Rs. 30 for that land. This is gross injustice.

There is no one to protest on behalf of those poor cultivators who are trying their level best to get justice. Such is the present atmosphere in the country that people are not willing to listen to different point of views. It is because of the prevailing atmosphere that on one is willing to pay heed to the right opinion and such injustice is taking place. We shall be satisfied if the Government admits that it has been unjust with these farmers but it is not even prepared to admit its mistake.

With these words I conclude.

13.00 hrs.

[English]

SHRI. M. RAGHUMA REDDY (Nalgonda): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, agriculture forms the bedrock of the Indian economy. Nearly two-thirds of the people of our country depend on agriculture. It constitutes nearly thirty-five per cent of the national income. But the allocation for agriculture has been decreasing gradually from the first Five Year Plan to the Seventh Five-Year Plan. The allocation for agriculture and allied subjects during the First Five-Year Plan was thirty-one per cent but it has now come down to twenty-two per cent. For agriculture alone, it is only 5.8 per cent, which is very low as compared to other countries. When we compare our national income with other countries, in U.K. it is only two per cent, in USA it is three per cent and in Canada it is four per cent

Agriculture provides employment to nearly two-thirds of the working class. It also provides raw material to the agro-based industries and other industries.

Agriculture plays an important role in the earnings from foreign trade. Especially sugar, tobacco, oilseeds and other commodities constitute nearly two-thirds of the income by way of foreign trade. The export earnings are even much more. There is an imperative need to develop agricultural economy, if we want to improve country's economy. But unfortunately, the Planning Commission and the Government of India are giving step-motherly treatment to agriculture. This year, the allocation for agriculture is Rs. 770 crores and for agricultural research, it is only Rs. 110 crores. I do not know how the Minister will achieve the required target with these meagre allocations.

The area under agriculture has enhanced from 122 million hectares to 165 million hectares during these forty-two years, but only thirty-six per cent of this area is being irrigated, that is, nearly sixty million hectares is the irrigated area and the rest is unirrigated area. If you want to irrigate the entire area, I do not know how many years it will take, but some studies reveal that by 2010 A.D., 110 million hectares will be irrigated. That means, yearly two million hectares will be irrigated. Will it be possible to do so by withholding the irrigation projects of all the States by the Government of India? All the State Governments are submitting proposals for the construction of irrigation projects but unfortunately, the Government of India has made it a point to withhold all the projects, especially the projects submitted by those States which are ruled by non-Congress parties. How are you going to increase the irrigated area then? You have to exploit the underground water but for the last four years, we have been facing severe drought. The ground water level has gone down but the river water is going waste to the sea. One part of the country is suffering due to excess rains whereas the other part is suffering for want of water. This is the situation in India. We have a number of peren-

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nial rivers but you are not taking any interest to connect these rivers. I have mentioned many times on the floor of this House—in fact, late Shri K.L. Rao had proposed it—about the linking of Ganga to Cauvery, but no action has been taken so far. Government is not taking any action on this. I leave it to the Government of India to consider it.

The peak food production was only during 1983-84, with 151 million metric tonnes. During 1987-88, it came down to 138 million metric tonnes. Now I think your target for this year is 166.52 million tonnes. By the end of the Seventh Plan, you have to achieve a target of 180 million tonnes. How are you going to achieve this target. The growth rate in agriculture is below 2% while the population growth is 2.2% and the Indian economic growth is 5%, and you are expecting 6% growth by the end of the Seventh Plan. How are you going to achieve this? How are you going to meet the food requirements of this country?

There is no sufficient allocation in the Budget. What are your plans?

There is no coordination between the Ministry of Energy and the Ministry of Water Resources. There should be some coordination. You have to allocate more quantity of energy to the agricultural sector but you are not doing that. You have not allocated NTPC quota as per the requirement of even the State Government of Andhra Pradesh. I request the hon. Minister to take concrete steps to coordinate all the Departments connected with the agricultural sector so that the agricultural production will be enhanced.

You have envisaged a number of food production programmes like rice thrust programme and others. Unfortunately, the production has increased only in respect of some trust programmes. This year you have taken 169 districts under rice trust programme in 14 States. You have to increase this programme to all the districts in the country. Why only 169 districts? Why cannot you extend it to all the districts of the country? There is no doubt, some enhancement in productivity but, when compared to other countries, it is very much less. I will quote some examples.

		<i>Kgs. (per hectare)</i>
Rice	India	1,600
	Japan	4,200
	USA	4,200
Wheat	India	2,000
	France	5,500
	Germany	6,300
Maize	India	1,500
	Italy	7,500
	USA	7,500
	China	3,500
Sugarcane	India	60,000

Cotton	India	196
	China	890
	USSR	717

There is a marginal increase in production. But for bajra and pulses, there is a decrease. I will quote.

The production of bajra, during 1970-71 was 622 KG. per hectare. Last year it was 378 KG.

Same is the case with pulses. During 1960-61, its production was 539 Kg per hectare. Now it is 512 KG. per hectare.

Except wheat and rice, the increase in the production of other crops is almost stable.

Coming to oil seeds, you have envisaged 15 million tonnes production target for this year and you want to make it 18 million tonnes.

In oilseeds, there are no good seeds available, except in Gujarat and in some parts around Delhi.

With regard to groundnut, the productivity is almost stable and specially about castor, in 1968 there was one variety called Aruna and I was stressing on its importance as a good variety and, after that, there is no good variety. I do not know what your oilseeds Departments are doing.

We request you to establish some more research institutes in rural areas for dryland agriculture. All the research institutes are situated around Delhi or Hyderabad or some big cities but, no research institute is located in rural areas. Based on agro-climatic zones, we have to establish some of the research institutes in rural areas.

Then only you can expect some good results.

Despite our providing many things and extending all facilities to the farmer, what is his position today? If he owns 10 or 15 hectares of land, he is economically below the low paid employee of the Government of India. That is the situation under the rule of the Congress Government for the last 42 years in this country. The status of farmers has gone down to that level. For any type of agriculture, seeds are very important. As you sow, so you reap is the saying. Seed is the most important factor for agricultural development. The Government has envisaged, last year, on 1st October 1988, a new National Seed Policy and a National Seed Project, Phase-III was approved on 25.8.88 with an outlay of Rs. 239 crores. But even then what is the level of production? By the end of the Seventh Plan, this Government is supposed to distribute certified seeds to the extent of 117 lakh tonnes or nearly 120 lakh tonnes. But against this target of distribution of certified seeds, only a quantity of 56.3 lakh quintals was distributed. During 1986-87, the distribution of breeders was to the extent of 28,600 quintals. During 1987-88, the distribution of foundation seeds was to the extent of 6,88,921 quintals. This is a poor performance. If good and quality seeds are not available and if they are not available at economical prices, how can the farmers purchase those seeds?

Sir, while formulating the approved National Seed Project, the main objective of it was to ensure timely and adequate availability of quality seeds as also suitable varieties at economical prices. Is this Government doing that? Does the Government supply quality seeds? How many farmers are getting these seeds? What about the farmers who are at the nook and corner of the country and in the tribal areas also?

Sir, in Andhra Pradesh, the State Gov-

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ernment has created the *Karshak Parishad*. The State Government has created about 1104 mandals. The State Government was to take up the seed programme for each mandal. Of course, it is at the starting point. It has not been fully achieved. But it is going to be achieved and every mandal should have its own seed producing plant in respect of certification, processing etc. Then only good quality seeds can be supplied to all the farmers of that mandal area i.e. 15-20 villages. Can this Government implement that scheme on an All-India basis? This Government can take Andhra Pradesh as a pilot State. This Government can implement the scheme by deploying its forces. It can ask the National Seeds Corporation to take up the scheme. The main point is that seeds are important for the development of agriculture. This Government must take up the seeds policy very seriously and allot more and more funds. Of course, it can cut some of the subsidies given to the farmers on pesticides, seeds or on some equipment. First, good quality seeds should be given. This Government should give hybrid seeds to the farmers wherever water potential is there. It should also evolve some target varieties for drought-prone areas specially for the cereals and some of the castor and other oil-seeds crops. Last year, this Government imported 35 tonnes of sunflower seed. I do not know to whom it was given. We do not know as to where the seeds have gone. Has this Government given the seeds to all the States equally or has it given to research people only? What is the performance? We want to know the performance of the Russian seeds so that we can import more quantities of seeds.

After the seeds, we have got the fertilizers. There are nearly 47 fertilizer producing units of nitrogenous and phosphatic fertilizers, 88 units of single super phosphatic fertilizers and 8 units of Ammonium phosphates. We have got 10 gas-based fertilizer units. Out of that, only three units have started their work and another 7 units have to commence their production. By the end of

the Seventh Plan, the requirement of nitrogenous fertilizers will be 92.53 million tonnes, phosphatic fertilizers will be 28.9 million tonnes. This is only your estimation. But I think the demand will be around 121 million tonnes. What is the capacity utilisation? The estimated capacity utilisation in the public sector is only 65 per cent whereas in the cooperative sector and private sector it is 90-95 per cent. Why there is this discrepancy? Why is your public sector unit not functioning well? Who is responsible for this? What action have you taken for fully utilising the non-utilised capacity? The expected production during 1989-90 is 87.24 million tonnes out of which 64.55 million tonnes is nitrogenous fertilizer and 22.69 million tonnes is phosphoric fertilizers. How are you going to meet this 121 million tonnes required for next year? How much are you going to import? The outlay for this is only Rs. 2708.75 crores out of which for continuing schemes it is Rs. 1976.71 crores and for new schemes it is only Rs. 82 crores. How are you going to achieve this fertilizer production indigenously? You say that you have given Rs. 3,000 crores as subsidy on fertilizer. To whom have you given it? This year, that is 1989-90, you have fixed the target of Rs. 3,121 crores. Everybody has requested you. Instead of giving it to the company, why don't you give it direct to the farmers. Why are you interested in paying it to the company? Why are you paying it to the public sectors which are not functioning well? At the cost of poor farmers, public sectors are enjoying the benefit of subsidy. It is not going to the farmers. Shri Bhajan Lalji, you come from a family of farmers and you know the difficulties of farmer— whether you are landlord or the absentee landlord. Kindly make a note of it and see that this subsidy go to the real farmer.

Even the subsidy amount of Rs. 530 crores which you realised by the sale of imported fertilizers, you have given that subsidy. Where is this subsidy going? You have to enquire about it. One thing I would like to know is whether there is any shortage of phosphoric acid. The Godawari Fertilizer Unit is closed because of lack of phosphoric



acid. No imports. What is the problem. The Chairman, of the Agro Industries of Andhra Pradesh rang me up to find out the fact. You are not giving phosphoric acid to the Godavari Fertilizer Unit. What is the use of it?

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI (Adilabad): Why Godavari? All fertilizer factories are like that.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY: I want to know the correct position.

We are using nitrogenous fertilizers. We require, our country requires the zinc phosphate which is in short supply. Instead of giving it to private persons, why don't you give it to agriculturists? Why don't you produce more quantities? A stage will come that all the 16 Indian minerals will be in deficit in the Indian soil. What are your plans? There are micro elements and macro elements. What are you doing for the deficiency of micro and macro elements? I would like to know whether you have any plan or you are just giving it to the private persons. The Government should take it up and you should establish more number of testing laboratory and pesticides testing laboratory so that the quality is tested. What do they require for balancing? We have to necessarily take up organic manures and green manures. What is your latest technology? What have you developed?

For the last 30 years, we have been hearing about pesticides. What about your technology? I would like to know whether any new techniques have been developed in this regard. I would like to know whether the laboratory programme and the extension programmes have taken up this new technology to the farmers. What are your agricultural universities doing? What is your Department of Extension doing? I would like to know whether any pamphlets or leaflets have been given and whether the T.V. and the radio are covering this subject. I want to know this in clear terms whether the balancing of organic fertilizers and green manures and other things have been developed.

Coming to pesticides, there is a substantial increase in the use of pesticides year after year. From 49,000 tonnes it is going to 84000 tonnes during this year. For any pesticides you should maintain quality control. So many adulterated pesticides are appearing in the market. The sellers are cheating the farmers. We have to start more quality tests and we have to open more number of pesticides laboratories in every nook and corner of the country; not just in the towns. Unfortunately what the Departments are doing is that they are opening pesticides laboratories only in cities. I request you that you should open more number of pesticides labs so that you can book the culprits as per the Essential Commodities Act. You please extend the Essential Commodities Act to these cheaters also.

I am happy that the import duty on 15 pesticides have been reduced from 105% to 70%. Why 70%? Why can't you waive it altogether? After all, it is going to the farmers. On raw materials also it is reduced from 14.7% to 60%. This is also a welcome measure. But you kindly see that the import duty is waived.

I am also thankful to the Hon. Minister because he has waived the import duty specially on the pesticides which the Andhra Pradesh farmers have imported for the control of heliothis. We have to develop it indigenously in our country. It is not possible for us to go every time to other countries to get these pesticides. In addition to that you should be careful about the possible threat of the locust problem. Scientists say that the possibilities of locust problem entering India are there. The exotic pests and other diseases coming to India from international arena should also be checked.

We are going in for the chemical treatment. But what about the biological control? How many predators and parasites have you developed? What is the criteria about it? How many research centres are working on it? I would tell the Hon. Minister that this is the cheapest control method. It is also a natural method. You can control it.

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Coming to horticulture orchard is very import. Out of the 64% dry land area you can develop only horticulture. Horticulture is an important subject non-a-days. You have to give some concessions to the orchard growers. When they go to commercial banks for loans, they are saying no. Of course, it is not your subject. They have made one service area approach programme. The original bank is not coming forward. Now new banks which are allotted to a particular village are also not coming forward because they say that they do not have the staff or it is very far away. Now such new problems are going to come to you. Farmers will come to you. You kindly think over it and talk to your colleagues and decide. The horticulturists and agriculturists should get loans from commercial banks.

The recovery from the agricultural sector is much more when compared to industrial sector. It is more than 60%, recovery from agriculture sector alone. Recovery is not there only with respect to the Government schemes where you have given it to small and marginal farmers. The recovery is somewhat less with them.

Sir, as regards Soil Conservation, which is an important one, it not only stops soil erosion, but also increases the underground water level. We have to construct more number of percolation tanks.

Out of 858 water-sheds only 35 water-sheds have been taken up in 18 States. We have to take up other water-sheds also. For this we require money. Out of Rs. 770 crores, we cannot take up all these programmes or out of 110 crores allotted to research schemes, we cannot take up this programme. The allotted amount will be sufficient to carry on the present schemes. How are you going to achieve the target in Soil conservation, water-shed management and gully-management? We must take up all these schemes.

Then, coming to Credit policy, National-

ised Banks are giving only 16% or 17% loans to agricultural sector. Recently, I had gone to some of the banks. Their policy is only 16% credit to agricultural sector. When they have achieved 16% target, they are stopping further credit to agricultural sector. Why is this bar to agriculturists? This is very bad. You are getting 35% to 36% of the national income from agricultural sector and two-thirds of the population depends on agriculture. Why only 16%. This matter may kindly be looked into.

Sir, the co-operatives and Commercial Banks put together are issuing only 11,750 crores of rupees as credit. What about the industrialists? For industrialists, they are giving Rs. 22 to 24 thousand crores. How much are you getting? Only 24% of the National income. By spending only Rs. 11,750 crores of rupees in the agricultural sector, we are getting 35% of the national income; the recovery from the agricultural sector is more. Why is this discrepancy?

In our State, we have started 'Single Window System', sanctioned by the Government of India, as a pilot scheme. It is working successfully. The farmers are getting more loans. But the problem is with the allocation of fund from the Reserve Bank of India to the State Co-operative Banks. This is a major handicap. NABARD has stopped loans to farmers and refinancing to the Banks. On the plea that we are giving more loans to agriculturists, more concessions to farmers and instead of 10% interest, we are collecting only 5.5% from the farmers, who pay the amount at the right time. What action have you taken on this? It is a State Government head-ache. Why should you stop it? Why should you stand in the way of farmers? You must take it up and help the farmers.

Animal husbandry is also one of the most important subjects. From this, we are getting 21,600 crores of rupees, which is 24% of the national agricultural income. The milk production is 48.7 million tonnes and it is estimated to go up to 51 million tonnes. But it is not sufficient. We have to increase the production of milk. The rural people are

deprived of this facility. The Operation Flood-III is not much helpful. We have constituted the National Dairy Development Board, which is not helping the farmers. The National Dairy Development Board has not spread its wings to the rural areas. They should extend its functions to the rural areas. It should not be confined only to Gujarat or all the cities alone. It should go to the rural areas.

As regards poultry, we are producing 18 billion eggs. Poultry farmers are also having some problems. Last time, the Government of India allowed import of maize. Some middlemen cheated the poultry farmers. This should directly go to the farmers. If you want to distribute it, you should allow the State Governments to distribute it directly or through Panchayat Mandals or Blocks, whatever is there. So my request is that these things should be operated. The operational point is felt to the Government of India. We are importing vaccines for teeth, mouth and rinser pest diseases but these vaccines are insufficient. You have to develop new vaccines in our country.

As regards fisheries development the production is 31.35 lakh tonnes as against the world production of 92 million tonnes. It comes to only 3 per cent. Per capita consumption of fish in India is only 3 kg as compared to 12 kg internationally and in Japan it is 86 kg. We are getting Rs. 580 crores by way of export of fish and our target is Rs. 700 crores. Our deep sea fishing is only 1 per cent of the world production. We have to purchase more vessels. I am told 1500 vessels were required in our country and you ordered for only 500 but only 147 are working. We have to encourage this scheme. Further we have to allot these vessels only to fishermen and not to politicians or big fellows who make business out of it.

Coming to rural development it is an important subject. Last time as usual you have allotted amounts for RLEGP and NREP but now you are going to merge these schemes with new schemes. Recently you

have introduced a new scheme called Jawahar Lal Nehru Rozgar Yojana by providing Rs. 500 crores and also Intensive Rural Development Programme to cover 120 districts suffering from acute unemployment. I do not know what does it mean. I want to know out of these 120 districts how many you have given to Andhra Pradesh. I do not know what is the criteria for selection of these 120 districts. Have you already selected these 120 districts or are you going to select them? We want to know the details of this scheme.

Previously houses were constructed for weaker sections under RLEGP scheme but this year you have made a very meagre allotment for this scheme. This scheme is meant for fire victims and flood victims. The housing programme is one of the best programmes. It actually helped the rural people. In Andhra we have constructed nearly 8 lakh houses for weaker sections. Something which you were giving earlier has been stopped under the RLEGP programme. Why is it so? Don't you want houses for weaker sections? You have merged these schemes and formed Jeevan Dhara. I request you to restore this scheme and provide housing facilities to the weaker sections. My request to you is that Jeevan Dhara should continue for deepening of the wells and construction of new wells for weaker sections. The pricing policy is not encouraging. You have not selected good farmers. You have selected only politicians and absent landlords to be represented in that committee. I want to real farmers to be represented on that committee. You encourage the farmers and the farming community as well.

[Translation]

SHRI K.N. PRADHAN (Bhopal): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Agriculture. It is common knowledge that the economy of our country is based on agriculture. It is the backbone of our economy. Not only our industries but even our exports are dependent on agriculture. A very large portion of our National Income is contributed by

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the agricultural sector and three-fourth of the our total population is engaged in agriculture or in agriculture related occupations.

Sir, we are on a sound footing today in respect of agriculture and this is the result of our concerted efforts in this field since the first Five Year Plan. We have had a challenging experience. Even though last year we were hit by the worst drought of this century and some States were hit by drought for third or fourth consecutive year, the production was more than our expectations. Sir, I would like to submit one point more. There are no two opinions that we have progressed a lot in the field agriculture but at the same time it is also true that we have not been able to make optimum utilisation of our land and increase our production to the maximum. We have not been able to bring the entire cultivable land under cultivation. We can increase our production by utilising our resources properly. The Hon. Prime Minister has reduced the rate of interest on the loans given to the farmer. I thank him for this. The Government has already reduced the rate of interest from 15 to 12 per cent. But I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it is not possible to reduce it further? From Reserve Bank of India, money reaches to the farmer through many processes. We can reduce the rate of interest further, if you pay attention to those processes.

It is a matter of joy that we have increased the production and have progressed in the agricultural sector also, but in view of the growing pressure of population in the country, which will grow more, efforts should be made for intensive and extensive growth of agricultural production. Agriculture plays an important role in our economic progress and if it receives a setback we cannot have all round development. We have to increase the production of agriculture at all costs.

Sir, in many States of the country, there is a lot of land which can be brought under cultivation. Production can be increased in

such States, as favourable conditions are present there. For e.g. in Madhya Pradesh, there is a lot of land as compared to other States, which can be brought under cultivation. Madhya Pradesh is also lagging behind in the field of irrigation. There are no adequate arrangements for supplying quality seeds, pesticides or quality fertilizers. If these are supplied regularly, we can definitely increase the production.

Sir, now I would like to draw your attention towards those things which can help in increasing the production without any expenditure. We have built big dams and canals for irrigation, but we are not paying attention towards their upkeep and even today, we have not been able to utilise the full potential of irrigation. I can speak for Madhya Pradesh but this is true of other States also. We are not able to provide adequate pesticides and fertilizers, quality seeds and uninterrupted power supply, even though we have made so many plans every year. This is the complaint of every district. We are unable to make arrangements for providing certified seeds. We cannot provide pesticides. The need of racks is also not fulfilled. In Haryana, racks are available within 10 to 15 kilometres, but in Madhya Pradesh, they cannot be found even within 200 to 300 kilometers. How can we provide pesticides? We want to increase the production of oilseeds and pulses, but even today caterpillar cause extensive damage to gram and other pulses. We are not able to supply pesticides in time. What type of pesticides are manufactured in India? Some were manufactured in the Union Carbide, which killed a large number of people whereas the other pesticides are ineffective and cannot even destroy caterpillars. The farmer thinks that he has sprayed the pesticides, and his fields are safe but instead of protection there is continuous loss.

The fertility of land decreases due to many reasons such as soil erosion and growth of 'Kans' and 'Gajal' grass. Both of these things have adverse effect on our production, as they decrease the fertility of land. Until we pay attention to these things,

we cannot increase our production.

Forest Conservation Act was enacted by the Government. We thought that we have saved forests through this Act. There is lakhs of acres of land in this country which is being cultivated by the tribals for generations, but now they are entirely on the mercy of the forest officers. This breeds corruption as those officials allow the tribals to cultivate only after taking bribe from them. Those who refuse to give bribe are not allowed to cultivate. Their crops are cut and burnt and their fields are destroyed. For generations, they have been cultivating in that region. We are neither able to provide them alternative employment nor are we able to conserve forests there. We should make some proper arrangements for them, so that they can do progressive and mechanised cultivation and irrigate and enhance their production. But we don't want to go to the root of the matter, so we just made a laws and thought that we have done forest conservation. In fact we have not been able to provide even one inch of land to forests. We can improve them in future and definitely enhance our production, if we make some arrangements under law.

There has always been a complaint of the farmers that every development work is done at the cost of the farmers. For every project, whether it is dam or any other thing, the land is acquired from the farmer. If you look at the data of the last forty years you can see for yourself how many farmers have been displaced and their lands acquired. Among them, more than 60 per cent have been ruined.

Irrigation facilities are made to increase agricultural production and for the prosperity of the people. Our Hon. Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi has always emphasized to fully compensate those whose land is acquired for these projects. But how many have been compensated throughout the country? Resentment is growing among the people due to the proposed dam on river Narmada. No arrangement have been made to compensate the farmers yet. There is no arrange-

ment for either providing them with alternative land or money or rehabilitating them or educating their children. This is not good for the country.

We have progressed in the field of agriculture. We have paid attention to animal husbandry, poultry and fisheries. But we have not paid as much attention towards these areas as in the case of agriculture. It is necessary, because in the rural areas of our country, the main problem is not of unemployment but of under-employment. Most of the people are dependent on agriculture. They remain unemployed for the most part of the year. We have to pay more attention towards animal husbandry, poultry and fisheries, to provide them employment for the whole year. By this, we can solve the problem of under-employment. We have prepared clusters and the number of people living below the poverty line have been identified. Not only this a target has been fixed that 15 per cent people will be lifted above the poverty line. But I would like to know how long will the remaining people look towards the banks with hope of getting financial assistance? There should be some arrangements which would benefit all. We can solve the problem of under-employment, by providing other types of employment in the villages.

In the field of agriculture, research and education facilities are available in our country. There should be balance in it. There is only one university in a big State like Madhya Pradesh. I request the hon. Minister of Agriculture to set up another university in Bhopal. Similarly, a scheme has been formulated by merging R.L.E.G.P. and N.R.E.P. in which 75 per cent funds will be provided by the Centre. But according to some States, the centre's formula of providing financial assistance to the States is not justified. I would like to submit about Madhya Pradesh. The poor State like Madhya Pradesh will be a loser due to the merger of both the schemes, because it was benefited by the R.L.E.G.P. scheme, as it was getting hundred per cent financial assistance under that scheme. You should provide some

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funds under every scheme.

A lot of hope has generated among the people with the implementation of Jawahar Rozgar Yojana. It will help in removing the unemployment. But its effect will be favourable only if it is implemented in all the districts. If it is implemented in 120 districts only, then poverty cannot be totally removed from the country. Besides, the people of remaining districts will also look towards the Government with the hope of getting assistance in some form or the other. I would request you to implement this scheme in all the districts, so that unemployment and poverty can be removed uniformly.

With those words, I support the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Agriculture.

[English]

SHRI NITYANANDA MISRA (Bolangir): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Demands of the Ministry of Agriculture. We congratulate the Minister of Agriculture for the superb performance of his Ministry. We have got a very good bumper crop in this Kharif season which is a record production. The prospects of Rabi Season are also excellent. It has been possible because of the tremendous amount of efforts made by the Ministry and correct strategy followed by the Minister. We experienced a devastating and unprecedented drought in the year 1987-88 which was probably the worst drought in this century. But effective steps were taken immediately to combat the drought as a result of which it had only a marginal impact on our economy. We are very happy that our economy has acquired a resilience and has developed a capacity to absorb the shock of a devastating drought. But there is not much room for complacency because the base of agricultural production still remains uncertain, unstable and weak. In any year, if the monsoon does not favour us, we may experience a similar or more severe drought than we

had seen earlier. The drought relief measures which have been taken are purely temporary in character. The only permanent and effective drought relief measure is irrigation. Unfortunately, in our country only one-third of the land has irrigation facilities. The rest of the two-third of the area is entirely dependent upon the whims and caprices of nature. Therefore, greater amount of attention should be given to irrigation and allocations for irrigation should be increased so that we have a steady and consistent growth in agriculture sector.

We have observed that modern and scientific techniques of cultivation can be adopted only when irrigation facilities are available. Green Revolution has been possible in those States where they have increased irrigation potential and utilised the facilities to an optimum degree. Hence, there should be greater thrust on irrigation. Irrigation should be given top priority if we want to increase our agriculture production substantially.

We have also observed that with the popularisation of the high yielding varieties of crops, our farmers are using pesticides and insecticides in very large quantities. Unfortunately, multinational are importing banned materials from other countries and dumping them in our country and our farmers in their anxiety to get rid of pest and diseases, are using these insecticides in larger doses. This leads to environmental pollution. Water and air get polluted which is a great health hazard. Also, the residue of toxic material is left in the cereals and vegetables and we consume them and this causes a great health hazard. Therefore, Government should take very stringent and firm measures against the import of banned pesticides from other countries. The agricultural extension workers should also be given sufficient training in the use of insecticides and pesticides so that they are able to give correct guidance and help to the farmers to see that larger doses are not used.

One difficulty faced by the farmers of our country is the availability of quality seed.

Seed, as you know, is a very critical and very important factor in agricultural production. The seed that we find in the market is of substandard quality. Sometimes the seeds turn out to be spurious also. This results in disastrous consequences. Uptill now, we have not been able to make available quality seed to the farmers. There is a collusion between agricultural officers who certify the seed and the unscrupulous traders and the merchants who deal in seed as a result of which the seed which is passed as a certified seed is inferior in quality. Therefore, the Government should take very stringent measures against these unscrupulous traders and should make available to the farmers by having a mechanism for multiplication of foundation seeds and nucleus seeds.

Our Agricultural Extension Officers or village level agricultural workers should be given intensive practical training in the field. Because when they persuade and motivate the farmers to accept better techniques of production, unless they have practical experience, they cannot do it very effectively. It does not become very convincing and inspiring. Therefore there should be intensive practical training for those extension workers who carry the knowledge of laboratories in the field. There should be refresher courses for them so that this developing science, the information and the knowledge can be made available to the extension officers and the agricultural workers also. When there is a bumper crop and the production improves, the farmers are faced with a dilemma. Because due to over-production, there is a slump in the market and the prices of the commodities go down below the cost of production. So, there is a distress sale. This is a really strange contradiction that when the farmers want to produce more and work harder, the price that he gets become lower because there is no support price for all agricultural commodities which he produces. There is support price for some commodities, like, oil, paddy, wheat, cotton and jute. But that is also not systematic. Most of the time when the production is good, there is a good harvest and there is sufficient amount of grains in the market, the tendency

is that the prices go down and the farmers suffer. So, the Government should devise a mechanism by which they should procure all these agricultural commodities when there is very good production and a very rich harvest. I would like to point out here that we are giving subsidy to fertilizer to the tune of a few thousand crores of rupees but we have not made similar efforts to persuade the farmers to go in for organic manure. We have got cow dung and also farm waste in colossal quantity in our country.

14.00 hrs.

It can be utilised for making compost; that will provide manure for the land; compost and organic manure will improve the texture of the soil and sustain its fertility. But we do not give an incentive to the farmer to go in for organic manure in a very big way. I request the Agriculture Minister to provide some monetary incentive to the farmers so that they will utilise the waste material of the farm and the cow dung. There should be some effort to be made for the whole of the country for making this organic manure so that our dependence on fertiliser will be reduced and it is just possible that we may not have the need to import fertiliser by wasting our valuable foreign exchange.

Our research scholars and scientists have solved the problem of production to a very great extent by evolving hybrid seeds. But we have observed that this variety is extremely susceptible to diseases and pests. Therefore, the necessity is there to use insecticides and pesticides in very large quantities which pollute the atmosphere and which is health hazard. I request the Agriculture Minister to see that our agricultural scientists and research scholars make efforts to evolve that kind of a seed which is disease-resistant, which is pest-resistant, because we know that they develop immunity after some time and the farmer requires pesticides of very high potency so that it can be effective. Therefore, there is a need for research in this field so that we shall get those varieties of seeds which will stand not only the disease but also the pest attack.

[Sh. Nityananda Misra]

My hon. friend has suggested that there should be a greater emphasis on horticulture. Fruit is a very important item in our diet. There is also a possibility for export of fruits. If we have orchards throughout the country and sufficient amount of incentive is given to the farmer for going in for horticulture, then it will also lead to the improvement of environment to a considerable extent. Therefore, there should be a greater emphasis on horticulture also.

I would like to speak a few words about my district which has been in the grip of drought this year also. My district has been experiencing drought conditions from the year 1986 continuously; and these successive droughts have completely destroyed the rural economy in my district. In the year 1987, we had an unprecedented drought and 210 panchayats out of 225, were very severely affected; last year also, we faced a similar drought; nearly 1800 villages had this problem from 50 per cent to 74 per cent; and in the rest 300 villages the problem was more than 75 per cent. In my constituency only 5 per cent of the crop area gets irrigation facility; 95 per cent of the area is dry and rain fed; it is situated in the drought prone belt of the State. So, the drought condition appears almost every year; this year also, because of the drought condition, nearly one lakh people migrated to Madhya Pradesh and North India in search of jobs. The crops have been completely destroyed and rural indebtedness has become a very heavy burden; it has crushed the farmer completely. Due to recurrence of droughts, the farmers will not be able to repay their loans which they have taken from the cooperative societies or from the commercial banks; and now they do not have anything to fall back upon. Unemployment position has also become very serious. The question of under employment does not arise because employment itself is not available. The minimum wage is not given to the farmer; the wage is much less than the minimum wage prescribed by the Government. The people are in the condition of semi-starvation. I had a discussion with the

Minister and wrote a number of letters to him suggesting some of the steps which should be taken by the Central Government in this regard. The amount of grant that we received last year and also this year is very very inadequate. This year also though eight months have expired, substantial amount of relief has not been provided to us.

Another serious feature of the drought is that the sub-soil water sources have completely dried up and the tubewells that we have in the rural areas are drying up and they are becoming defunct. And in the towns also with a population of 60,000 there is absolute water scarcity and they are now providing one-fifth of the requirement of the water. Therefore, it has created a very alarming and a difficult situation.

I would like to suggest a few steps that the Agriculture Minister may be kind enough to take. We have got ten blocks in our district. They may be brought under the DPAP scheme. These ten blocks which are rain-fed do not have any source of irrigation. And these schemes should be funded centrally by the Central Government because the State Government is completely incapable of providing resources to combat the drought conditions that we have been experiencing year after year. We want at least 500 lift irrigation points. We have six tributaries of the river Mahanadi flowing in our district but we do not have any irrigation project. Therefore, we are not able to provide irrigation. I request the Central Government to provide funds for 500 lift irrigation points.

Water-shed management is a very important step which can be taken for preserving the moisture and water harvesting structures also will go a long way in replenishing the water resources in the ground level. And this should be funded by the Central Government and monitored by the Central Government so that the benefits will accrue to us as the State Government with its limited resources is unable to take up these schemes. There are five irrigation schemes pending with the CWC. They have not been cleared by them. When we ap-



proach the State Government they say that those schemes are lying with the CWC. When we approach the CWC they say that the State Government has not furnished the information, and that they are unable to do anything. I request the Agriculture Minister to expedite the clearance of these irrigation projects which when implemented will solve our problem of drought.

SHRI ZAINAL ABEDIN (Jangipur): I rise to oppose the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Agriculture. I oppose them because the agrarian policy and strategy pursued by the Union Government since independence have miserably failed to protect and safeguard the interests of a very vast majority of our farming community, namely, the small and marginal farmers, the sharecroppers, the agricultural workers as well as the other poor people of the rural areas.

Our agrarian policy has in fact been formulated not with a view to protecting the interests of these people, but it is rather to provide a greater scope and opportunity to a few zamindars, landlords and industrialists to exploit the people who actually till the land and produce commodities with their sweat and blood.

The sole objective of our agrarian policy is to increase production. And, as a result of it production has increased considerably. But have our cultivators been benefited by the increase in production? No. With the increase in production, there has been an increase in their poverty also. Their hunger and starvation have increased, their unemployment and illiteracy have increased. The process of looting the land of the small and marginal farmer has become speedier resulting in the increase in the number of landless agricultural workers. Their purchasing capacity has declined. Their burden of loans has become heavier and even the per capita availability per day of cereals, pulses and other commodities or articles has also declined. It is a shame that after forty-two years of our independence, the hon. Finance Minister has to admit that due to persistent deficiency in production of most

pulses, the per-capita availability of pulses has been declined. In 1951, the per-capita availability of pulses per day was 61 grams, but it declined to 36 grams in 1987, and there was a further decline to 33 grams in 1988. What does it mean? It means that the more the peasants will produce, the less they will get. Then why do they produce more? This is a question, which deserves to be properly replied.

Sir, the Government is trying to present a rosy picture of the performance of our agricultural sector. But the prevailing situation indicates that our agrarian crisis has been deepening and sharpening day by day. It is a matter of serious concern that more and more land and other rural assets are being concentrated in the hands of a few. After four decades of our planned economy, the bottom thirty per cent of our rural household holds only four per cent of the rural assets while the share of the top thirty per cent is seventy-eight per cent.

In Punjab, 40.8 per cent of the cultivable land was under the ownership and possession of small and marginal farmers having holdings of less than two acres in 1975-76. But it had come down to only eleven per cent in 1985-86. On the other hand, the operational area under the ownership of big farmers having holdings of more than four hectares has gone up from 33.8 per cent in 1975-76 to 68.5 per cent in 1985-86. This had happened in Punjab, which is the heartland of our so-called green revolution, where modern production technology had been applied in a large scale. This single instance can act as an eye-opener. Unless basic land reform programmes are properly implemented, unless the distribution of ceiling surplus land is vigorously effected and unless the existing production strategy is changed, there will only be concentration of land and other rural assets in the hands of a few, throwing crores and crores of our rural people out of their livelihood. Sir, much has been said about land reforms, and about redistribution of the surplus land. But all these have provided to be a pious wish only. What is needed is, some positive and effective

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efforts to translate the pious wish into action. Only 29.64 lakh hectares of land have so far been declared surplus. Out of this, 24.37 lakh hectares of land have been taken possession and only 18.05 lakh hectares have been distributed. This distribution too in so many cases had been in paper only. The allottees did not get possession of the land, or were later evicted from the land. However, twenty per cent of the distributed land had been distributed in West Bengal alone though there exists only 3.6 per cent of the total cultivable land in the country. This success in distribution of the surplus land of the West Bengal Government clearly shows that nothing but strong political will is required. The Government at the Centre lacks that political will. Otherwise, the States ruled by Governments belonging to the same party as at the Centre, could go a long way in this regard. But till today only 6 per cent of the agricultural households own 50 per cent of the cultivable land and 94 per cent of them own the remaining 50 per cent of the cultivable land. The hon. Finance Minister in his budget speech has stated that agriculture is the priority sector in our plans. We may now examine what priority has been given to agriculture. My friend, Mr. Reddy, has already mentioned that point.

A provision of Rs. 1290 crores was made for agriculture in 1988-89 budget. In 1989-90 budget the allocation for agriculture has come down to Rs. 1203 crores. That means, the allocation is less by Rs. 87 crores compared to last year's allocation. In irrigation also, the allocation has declined by Rs. 12 crores from Rs. 217 crores in 1988-89 to Rs. 205 crores in 1989-90. In rural development, there has been a marginal increase of Rs. 3 crores only. All these three—agriculture, irrigation and rural development—taken together, the budget provision in 1988-89 was Rs. 3266 crores and in 1989-90 it has come down to Rs. 3170 crores. So the allocation in 1989-90 is less by Rs. 96 crores as compared to that of last year. The total budgetary provision has increased by 8 per cent this year. If this ratio of increase

would have been maintained in agriculture, irrigation and rural development, then a sum of Rs. 278 crores more would have been required in addition to the allocation that was made in 1988-89. But that has not been done. Rather a sum of Rs. 96 crores has been cut. So the allocation represents an actual decline by Rs. 374 crores. This is the priority agriculture has been given to.

Government has proposed to launch a new intensive rural employment programme called the Nehru Rojgar Yojana. A provision of Rs. 500 crores has been made in the Budget for this programme. With this money the Government wants to provide gainful employment to at least one member of each family living below the poverty line in the selected 120 districts. 300 million people are living below the poverty line in the whole country. And in the selected 120 districts the number of people living below the poverty line will be at least 80 million comprising 16 million families, with five member in each family. An individual family can get only Rs. 330 if the entire amount of Rs. 500 crores is equally divided among these families. Therefore, a man can be provided employment for 33 days in a year for only Rs. 10 as wages per day. So it is not possible to provide intensive and gainful employment with such a meagre amount.

Another new programme i.e. free distribution of a pair of sarees to destitute woman has also been announced. May I ask the hon. Minister as why they are destitutes? Who is responsible for that? What steps have been taken to eliminate their destitution for ever? Are you allowing their destitution to survive only to take the advantage of pouring some mercy on them from time to time by means of distribution of a pair of sarees or the like?

Last year also a number of new programmes were announced. What has happened to those programmes? You promised to set up a National Agricultural Credit Relief fund. Has it been set up? Has your *Jaldhara* programme percolated down to cultivators? What is the achievement in implementing

the *Kutir Jyoti* programme till today? Have the farmers been provided with 7.5 per cent discount on various varieties of fertilisers? No. Then what is the use of announcing new programmes?

**AN HON. MEMBER:** For elections.

**SHRI ZAINAL ABEDIN:** Now I would like to say a few words about the Special Jute Development Programme and Special Rice Production Programme. What are the main objectives of these programmes? The main objective of these programme is apparently to increase the production of raw jute and rice respectively. But what provision is there in these programmes? There is no provision of remunerative price of raw jute. There is no provision of enhancing the irrigation facilities. Only the sale of pesticides spray machines and other agricultural implements has been guaranteed under these programmes. The only objective of these programmes is to provide to the multinational companies a larger market for their goods. The agrarian policy of the Government has pushed our peasantry back on the verge of ruination, but these companies have been allowed to make huge profits. In 1965-66, the consumption of fertiliser was to the tune of 7,57,000 tonnes but now it is 90 lakh tonnes. In 1966, the number of tractors in the country was 54,000 and in 1980, it rose to 5,23,000. The number of energised pump sets was two lakhs in 1960-61, but in 1984-85 it had gone up to 35,54,000. So, it is not the peasantry but the owner of the factories who have been benefited by our agricultural policy.

The price index of raw jute has increased to 175 points—1970 being the base year—but the price index of jute products has risen to 242 points. The price indices of cotton and sugar cane have gone up to 185 and 180 points respectively. But the price index of chemical fertilisers has reached the level of 239 and that of agricultural implements, such as, sprayers, etc. has gone up to 450. As regards pesticides, it is 500. The Government appears to be over-satisfied and very much complacent with the perform-

ance of our agricultural sector. It has become customary for the Government that the year in which there is a good crop, it glorifies its production strategy and claims the credit, but the year in which there is a failure of crop, it blames the weather conditions. But they never take into account the inherent weaknesses and the anti-peasantry aspect of their policy. The production of raw jute has declined from 10.89 million bales in 1985-86 to 7.35 million bales in 1986-87 and again to 5.80 bales in 1987-88. This decline in production is largely attributed to a decline in acreage as well as in productivity, as admitted by the Government.

Sir, it can be very emphatically said that during the next year there will be further decline in acreage. Unless remunerative price of raw jute is ensured, no one can expect that raw jute production will reach a high level as expected. I would, therefore, request the hon. Minister to take proper steps to ensure remunerative price for the agricultural produce, to ensure re-distribution of the ceiling surplus land among the landless cultivators, to ensure enactment of Central Minimum Wages Act for the agricultural workers.

Sir, agriculture is the backbone of our economy. But till today this backbone is not strong. It is very much vulnerable and weak. If this state of affairs is allowed to continue, our economy as a whole will not be able to stand erect. With these words, I conclude my speech.

**SHRI UTTAM RATHOD (Hingoli):** Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I do not know which particular point I should deal here. My predecessors by and large have touched different areas, which if tackled properly can help the agriculturists in this country. I want to restrict myself only to one particular aspect and that aspect is the price fixation of agricultural produce. In 1965, Government appointed the Agricultural Prices Commission. Since then, so many resolutions were brought in. So many Members, including Prof. Ranga, senior-most Member spoke on it and ulti-

[Sh. Uttam Rathod]

mately four and a half year back, we found that APC has been converted into Agricultural Costs and Prices Commission. The contents are the same. The method is the same. Only the nomenclature is changed. At least, in the Indian Railways, when they change the name from 3rd class to 2nd class, they at least give mattress on the berth or seat. But here only the nomenclature is changed but no more facilities are given to the agriculturists.

When I asked a question about how the prices are fixed I was informed of 13 conditions or criteria on which agricultural produce prices were fixed. In that, they have also said that the demand and supply rule shall be applicable. For the things that we produce, the demand and supply rule is applicable. When things are produced in public undertakings and factories, for those goods, demand and supply rule does not operate. It is the price quoted by that particular industry that is final. I do not know. Why is this discrepancy? Is it not a factory? Is it not a production, as any other production made in the factory? I want to know what is the difference between the production in agriculture and production in say, mining or any other field. If the same principles are applied here, I think, most of the head ache is likely to disappear.

When I was trying to study this problem in depth and when I thought of bringing a Bill which I introduced last time, namely the Agricultural Prices Fixation Bill, I tried to scan through some of the objectives of the IV Pay Commission. In the Introductory Part, they started with the remark of the Springton Commission appointed by the Britishers in the year 1912 or 1915. After that, another commission was there. Then of course, in free India we had three more Commissions and in the Fourth Commission, they have explained how the theory of giving wages and salaries to Government servants has been arrived at. It is very interesting. Now they have come to realise the importance of many things and they say it is not just the

existence of the Government Officer or the Government servant for which he should be paid but his social needs also should be considered and he should be paid for it. It is a very good laudable objective that his social needs should be considered and they should be met. It is necessary and compulsory for the Government to see that their social needs are maintained.

But, when you speak of agriculture, you speak of supply and demand position, you speak about what we have invested including the rent of our land and our own labour and you give us only 2% or 3% or some 5% on the return. What about the social obligation to my own family? Am I not expected to teach my children? Am I to deprive them of all the technical courses? Am I expected to put my children in the primary school only which is available there and which runs most of the time without teachers?

SHRI ANIL BASU (Arambagh): That is also not available.

SHRI UTTAM RATHOD: What about health? There are no roads. There is no infrastructure for agricultural development. You want me to work in that area where the doctors are reluctant to go. 350 doctors have refused to go to rural areas.

SHRI ANIL BASU: Why is it so?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: No comments. Let the Minister reply. Why are you going on asking questions?

SHRI UTTAM RATHOD: I do not know. We are on the same platform. This is the state of affairs. I want to know why we are being discriminated against. When you give loans to the industrialist, it is credit. That credit facility is available to the industrialist. When you give us, it is only loan though it is called credit. The whole property is mortgaged. The whole plot is mortgaged with the bank. I want to know why. If in the case of the industrialist, only that much plot and machinery is mortgaged and for the rest of the things he is free, why do you do that with us? When

the crops fail, the cooperative banks, especially under the instructions of the Reserve Bank of India which has already been very kind to the cultivators in reducing the rate of interest by 3%, demand the money back from the farmer and so, even the zinc sheets and the roof of the house is taken off and it is sold away. I want to know why.

The other day we discussed in one of the scientific and technology meetings, the different schemes that can help us to fight drought. The medical research came forward and they told us that they have been able to find out some tablet which can quench the thirst of a man. My friend Mr. Charanjit Singh Walia and I were sitting together. I asked him "How are you going to give this pill to your cow or bull because they want more water?" At that meeting, we were told that we can have artificial rains also. It is good. Our science and technology is doing wonderful work but, with all these things, mind you, we have not been able to make our agriculturist stand on his legs.

One thing for which I should compliment our Government is that before Independence, they promised that they will reconstruct agriculture. They could not do that. But, they have been definitely doing their best by offering land to the farmer through right to the tiller, by abolishing zamindari, by providing high-yielding variety seed, fertiliser, irrigation facilities, regulated market, warehousing corporation godowns, and all these things. But these things are not enough. What is required more is not only these facilities but a proper price that is paid to him. Sir, you will be shocked to know that the Government offers Rs. 170 per quintal for wheat whereas the handling charges of one bag of that foodgrains—whether it is rice or wheat—are Rs. 107. This reply was given on the Floor of this House. The extra money that the Government has taken on handling charge, does it go to meet the social needs of the Government servants? I want to know the details in this regard. For producing one quintal of wheat, the Government pays me Rs. 170 and for handling the same bag, it gives the FCI Rs. 107 or Rs. 109. Sir, please

see the discrepancy in this regard. The Government has to plug the loopholes of that Department and give us something more. After the meeting was over, I told some of my friends that if Indian agriculture was failing anywhere it was failing in one way, that is the agriculturists are not given the prices that they rightfully deserve. For the whole of this country, the Government wants one price. In this regard, I would like to say that in the matter of payment of DA, CCA etc. The Government has discriminated against big cities and small towns, etc. I think, the Government gives more house-rent allowance and other things for the employees serving in the cities. The foodgrains produced under dry cultivation fetches the same price as foodgrains produced in Bihar and Haryana where 80 per cent of the land is under irrigation. Does it mean the yield will be the same? Does it mean the quality will be the same? I think, it is not so. But still the Government has taken all precautions to see that the man from the rural area does not come up. Sir, you hail from Tamil Nadu. You please tell us as to what is the condition of the cultivators in your State. You will agree with me that this particular way of putting all the states on the same footing will have to be given up. The Government will have to have at least 3-5 agro-climatic zones and the prices should be fixed in accordance with the yield of that area.

I now come to the new scheme that was started two years ago i.e. the Crop Insurance Scheme. Again, I would like to say that a very nice name has been given. I do appreciate it. But I also told Shri Makwana who luckily happened to handle that Department that this is not crop insurance and this is nothing but he is ensuring the loan that he has given to us. We are insured for Rs. 100/- and if our crop fails, the Government gives us Rs. 150/-. Further out of this amount, Rs. 100/- is taken away by way of loan plus an interest of Rs. 12/-. The total comes to Rs. 112/- and only Rs. 38/- remains for all the risk that the farmer has undertaken. I have never seen this business. When the Government takes the average yield or standard yield, 80 per cent of it is average yield. There also, it

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has been reduced. When the Government speaks to us, it speaks about strategy. When the Government gives us money under the scheme, it brings it down to 80 per cent and start counting. Why all these things are done? Whom are we fooling? Are we not fooling those poor kisans who are producing food for us? How long can we fool them? They have started sending their representatives to this House. Their boys have started studying economic, agricultural economic etc. Their boys have also started entering the Government service like IAS, IPS etc. It will be wrong on our part to think that this thing can continue for long. It will not continue for long. We will have to see that they are paid properly and looked after properly and all the infrastructure is given to them.

Lastly, I hope all the gods in the Ministry of Agriculture like Shri Hari-ji, Shri Shyamlal-ji, Shri Prabhu-ji and Shri Janardhan-ji and the head priest Shri Bhajan Lal-ji will look after us properly. There is already a cry do not produce more than what you require. If you do that you will fetch more price. Shri Sharad Joshi has given this call. Some day, it is bound to catch the imagination. You will be failing in that. Just now, my predecessor Mishraji congratulated the Minister. I do not know if I have to congratulate the Ministers or their stars. Luckily, their stars are very good. I want them to look after this.

14.40 hrs.

[SHRI SHARAD DIGHE *in the Chair*]

PROF. P.J. KURIEN (Idukki): I rise to support the Demands for Grants for Ministry of Agriculture. Agriculture is a crucial sector of our economy. The largest employment is generated by agriculture. The highest percentage of GNP is contributed by agriculture. And I must congratulate the Ministry and the Government that the performance on the agriculture front is satisfactory. This year, we are going in for a record production. This season, it is predicted that we will be exceeding the target. Our production may go

up to 52 million tonnes as against 47 million tonnes in 1985 when we have the peak production. Even with all this, I do not feel that we have exploited the full potential of Indian agriculture. We are yet to achieve the peak in agricultural production. Why I say so is that our average yield per hectare with regard to wheat is 1848 kilogram. Whereas the world average is 2,144 kilograms per hectares. Similarly, in rice, our average yield per hectare is 2,025 kilogram whereas the world average is more than 3000 kilogram. Again, in the field of fertilizer consumption, we are far below the target. Even the Punjab, where the per hectare consumption of fertilizer is the highest is lower than many developing and developed countries. Why I say this is because in spite of the best performance of the Agriculture Department and the Ministry, we have not yet achieved the peak in the production. This does not detract from the fact that we have made great strides in agriculture. Over the last few years, we have even doubled the production in agriculture. But yet we should continue our efforts to achieve the peak production in agriculture for which there is a large potential in our country.

There are various factors which are to be attended to in order to increase further our production to achieve the peak position in agriculture. The most important is certainly the production of high yielding varieties of crops both food crops and cash crops. I agree that our scientists have done well. They have done a good job. The Green Revolution was made possible because of the achievement of our scientists in this field. But we have to pay special attention to this fact.

Our farmers are financially in a difficult position and the capacity of our farmers being what it is, they cannot consume fertilizer in an abundant measure. Therefore, the result should be so oriented as to produce high yielding varieties, at low in take of fertilizers. I understand that with regard to wheat we have made some achievement. Not only in wheat, with regard to rice and other commercial crops also research

should be conducted.

Another important aspect is the scientific protection of plants where much research is being done. New genetic engineering has opened new possibilities of evolving disease resistant seeds and I commend the research on that side. But when I went through the budgetary documents, I found that in this sector the amount allotted last year was Rs. 96 crores; but actually what has been spent is only Rs. 95 crores. I understand that for the next year they have increased the allocation to Rs. 110 crores. I hope, more attention will be paid to this side of plant protection. I am not saying that we have not achieved anything. But I only say that more attention should be paid to it because it is a very crucial sector which can revolutionise the whole agricultural economy of our country.

In this connection, I cannot but say something about the Rootwilt disease that is affecting the coconut farms in Kerala. For the last forty years the coconut farms in Kerala have been affected by the Rootwilt disease and many districts in Kerala have been affected by now. Much research has been and is being done on this side. The fact is that coconut is the backbone of Kerala's economy. The Government's record shows that about ten million people are dependent for their livelihood on coconut cultivation. Unfortunately so far no proper remedy has been discovered for this Rootwilt disease. I read in some newspapers that CPCRI, a unit under ICAR which is a coconut research station, has discovered the organisms causing this disease. Maybe, they have discovered the organisms. But they have not so far come out with a remedy for this disease. I would request the Ministry to give whatever assistance needed in this regard so that we should fight this disease in all earnestness.

When apple was affected by some serious disease it was declared as a national disease and all assistance was given by the Government to tackle that disease. Likewise I would request that in the case of coconut also it should be considered as a national

disease and all assistance should be given for fighting this disease.

PROF. N.G. RANGA (Guntur): Likewise cotton also.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: With regard to cotton also as Prof. Rangaji says. I fully agree with him.

You yourself have admitted in this report that coconut oil is a good vegetable oil. Everybody knows that a lot of people especially in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and other States use coconut oil for cooking purposes. It is an edible oil. But you are not declaring coconut as an oil seed. I should say that it is a discrimination. I don't see any reason for this kind of discrimination against coconut. I urge upon you that coconut should also be declared as an oil seed and all the assistance given to other oil seeds should also be given to coconut.

Regarding plant protection, I would say one word about pepper. Even though pepper is a commodity that is exported from our country, the production of pepper is coming under Agriculture Ministry. You must know that in the 50s, India was the largest exporter of pepper. 80% of the world pepper export trade was from India. Today it is 20%. Nothing has been done to encourage the pepper growers and now pepper is affected by a serious disease, which is called 'quickwilt'. 25 thousand hectares of cultivated land in Kerala have been affected by this disease. On the first of March, the Pepper Board had recommended to the Ministry that a chemical called 'Ridomol', the only chemical that can be used against this disease and which has also been recommended by ICAR Scientists, be imported. It is more than a month; since the request has been pending with the Ministry. So far no sanction has been given for importing this. By every day's delay, the country is losing two lakhs of foreign exchange in dollars. As I said, 25 thousand hectares of pepper cultivation have been affected by this disease. Today itself, you call the Officer-in-charge and take him to task and see that it is sanctioned immedi-

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ately. 99% of the pepper growers are small cultivators. They cannot afford to pay a very big price for this. I request that 175 tons of Ridomil should be imported, duty-free and it should be made available to the growers.

Sir, with regard to the price aspect, I do not want to go into that, because everybody has spoken about that. I would only like to say one thing. There is a complaint from farmers and producers all over the country that the norms used by the Commission, while fixing the price on the basis of cost, etc., do not reflect the cost of inputs. I would only request that the norms should be revised so that the agriculturists throughout the country get a better price. What about the commodities which are not given support price? For example coconut. It is very vital as far as Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and other Southern States are concerned. Now Orissa and West Bengal are also growing coconut. For coconut, there is no support price at all. This year, the price of coconut in Kerala has fallen like anything and the growers are selling coconut at throw-away prices.

(Interruptions)

Sir, three years before when there was such a situation, our Prime Minister was kind enough to intervene and direct the Agriculture Ministry to step in and procure coconut. NAFED was entrusted with this work. This year, since the prices have fallen so much, I would request that NAFED be asked to step in to procure coconuts, till the prices become normal.

Again, coming to the Rural Development sector, I would congratulate the Prime Minister for announcing the Nehru Rojgar Yojana where RLEGP and NREP have been amalgamated. I would however like to sound a word of caution here. The funds allotted under NREP and RLEGP are spent by the State Governments. I do not say that they squander away the funds. But there is no mechanism to monitor this. It may be the Government of the Congress party or any

other party. In every State, there should be some mechanism to monitor this. The money is given by the Central Government and the Central Government has no control over this expenditure. When this new scheme is implemented, I suggest that there should be sufficient provision for monitoring this and to see how the money is spent and those officials who are responsible for squandering away the money should be taken to task. This report states that the Prime Minister has written to the State Chief Ministers, regarding the functioning of the co-operative societies, that election should be conducted regularly and as far as possible supersession of elected societies should be avoided. Sir, what is happening in my State? Elected societies have been superseded without any reason. Officials who are willing and pliable are appointed. Bogus voters' lists are made and elections are conducted. There is undue interference on the part of the State Governments. I would request that since NCDC is giving money for the cooperative societies, the NCDC and Central Government cooperative department should have some control over the way the elections are held and cooperation department is administered. With these words I support the Demands for Grants for the Ministry of Agriculture.

[Translation]

SHRI VIJOY KUMAR YADAV (Nalanda): Mr. Chairman, Sir, agriculture is the mainstay of the people of our country and our country's development depends on agriculture only, but it is regrettable that this sector has not attracted Government's attention nor does the Government has any concern for the people depending on agriculture except that they do express concern in speeches and this is the reason that backwardness continues to persist even after so many years of independence. The main reason for this is negligence of agriculture. Government has mentioned the 'Green Revolution' as one of its achievements and though it is a fact that some states have really ushered in 'Green Revolution' and agriculture has developed there, yet a large



part of the country is still very backward in the field of agriculture. It has been stated that the Government has achieved great success in this field and this year being the election year, tall claims will be made, but it is very simple to sum up the situation. Even today, agriculture depends upon nature and we cannot claim even after 40 years of independence that if nature is not favourable to agriculture, we shall be able to maintain the level of production. What happens generally is that when we receive good monsoons and consequently production increase, the Government takes credit for it saying that its efforts have bore fruits but when there is drought and the production decreases, Government says that the nature has been unkind and that nobody can help in it.

Even today the expectations of our farmers are not that high. All that they want is that they should be assured of water supply for irrigation throughout the country, but the Government has not been able to assure even this much to the farmers even 40 years after independence. Our farmer work hard day and night and all that he needs is water for irrigation, but alas, a large part of our cultivable land is still un-irrigated. Our basic problems are floods and drought and both of them are related to agriculture, but Government has not so far been able to find a solution because both are inter-connected. If the work is done properly, the water which causes floods can be utilised in the drought affected and scarcity-prone areas and in that case both these calamities can prove to be complementary to each other, but this is not happening at present.

15.00 hrs.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, a lot is being said about farmers, but one good thing that has emerged this year or the last year is that an awakening is being witnessed among the farmers. They have started thinking in terms of struggling for their rights and raising their standard of living. They are becoming increasingly aware that the Government is ignoring them. It is my considered opinion that no matter how grossly Government

ignores them, the farmers are becoming self-reliant. They are launching agitations. They are looking towards handful of industrial labourers and wondering how they manage to get their demands accepted by organising themselves, whereas the demands of the people who constitute 80 per cent of the population are being ignored. They know that they are being ignored because they are not organised, do not take part in processions and are unable to pressurise the Government. Due to this, they are being looted and are being exploited. The people who feed the country, play a prominent role in the economic development and toil hard day and night, are neglected. They are hungry and there is no one to listen to their grievances.

Demand is often raised that agriculture should be categorised as industry or remunerative prices should be fixed for their produce, but it is not being done. One of our colleagues belonging to the ruling party has just stated that there are some problems before the Government relating to agricultural prices. He has explained in detail the indifferent attitude of the Government in the matter. I feel that his points are worth noting. Why do the Government not pay remunerative prices to the farmers? Assurances have been given here many times and hon. Shri Bhajan Lal has also given assurances many times. There are no two opinions among the members on the subject whether they belong to the ruling party or to the Opposition. Every speaker will raise this question in the House and every time the same stereotyped reply will come saying that these things as such, how can their prices are essential commodities consumed by the common man and, be increased. The bogey of general price rise in consequence is also raised.

We find that the prices of industrial goods go up every year but the prices of the farmers' produce fall every year. The Government must offer them remunerative prices. If Government do away with subsidy. It will not be acting in the welfare of the farmers. If it wants to give reasonable and

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remunerative prices to the farmers, it will have to take recourse to subsidy. It is a must to inspire the farmers to increase their production. Keeping in view the level of awareness among the farmer, it is necessary to give them remunerating prices. At the same time, supply of agricultural commodities to the consumers at reasonable price will have to be ensured. For this, the Government will have to come into the picture, and then only it can be ensured.

Another point which I want to submit is about the farmers' debts. Whether he owes debt to the banks, cooperative societies or to the money lenders, his condition is pitiable. The laws are there, but they are rarely helpful to the farmers in the country. When discussion on farmers is made here, our Minister of Agriculture thinks of only rich and big farmers. But the real farmer in the village who works hard in the fields alongwith his family members is in bad plight. This farmer is under heavy burden of debt. The outstanding loans of big industrialists are written off. Therefore, the farmers of the entire country are justified in demanding writing off of their outstanding debts, so that they are able to get new loans to improve their lot. I want to say one thing about the condition in the villages of the country. The ownership of the land is concentrated in a few hands. The policy adopted by the Congress Government since pre-independence has been to acquire the surplus land from the zamindars and to distribute it to the tillers. The ruling party members say that the same policy is being followed even today. Laws for land reforms have been enacted but big zamindars have still managed to corner vast lands. Somehow or the other they have been able to retain the lands and they are not giving it away to the landless. Prosperity cannot be brought about in the country until the land is allotted to the tiller. It is true that agriculture production has gone up in some states, but on the whole there are people in India who own vast chunks of land, but do not know where exactly that land is located. Therefore, such land must be taken away. In

the end, I want to say a few points about my own district.

The yield per hectare in Bihar is low as compared to other States. The yield per hectare in India is low as compared to other countries. The same is the case with Bihar vis-a-vis other States. Although, the land of entire Ganga plateau, of which this district is a part, is fertile and the farmers are also hardworking but there is no arrangements for irrigation and supply of electricity. Land is not protected against floods and drought. Therefore, my submission is that you must think seriously about Bihar. The Prime Minister has just hinted about a new employment scheme and I feel it is a step in the right direction. He has stated that plans should be formulated at the district level because the conditions vary from district to district. The plan should be formulated according to the irrigational needs of a particular district. There are big rivers in my constituency but they are not perennial rivers and as such, the farmers cannot depend on rivers for irrigation. I have been pressing for a demand since 1980 that when a canal from the Ganga can be taken to the south, why it cannot be done in Bihar. During the rainy season, when there is excess water in the Ganga, this water can be taken to Nalanda and other districts through canal, and thus water resources can be created by constructing a canal from Rajgiri hills and electricity can be generated. Attention should be paid towards establishing agro-based industries in this area. If Government takes up all such works, prosperity can be brought about in my area.

In the end, I want to say one more think. Before independence, potato traders from erstwhile Punjab (now in Pakistan) used to come to Bihar Sharif to buy potato seed, but now when we have our own Government, people from Nalanda have to go Punjab to buy quality seed. Earlier, best variety of Potato was grown in Bihar Sharif, but now we have to go to Punjab for the same. Why should not a research centre be opened in this area so that quality seed is made available to the people. A small research centre

has been opened there but it has no utility. Potato is grown on a large scale in our area, and therefore, a research centre must be established there so that a high yielding variety of Potato could be developed. Potatoes and onions are exported from other areas but not from Bihar. Such discrimination should not be made. Improved varieties are grown in our area and, therefore, arrangements for their export should also be made. With these words I conclude.

[English]

PROF. N.G. RANGA (Guntur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I find myself in agreement with almost all the points that are made by the Members of this House from all sides and this has been the experience during every debate, I mean every debate on agriculture, yet the farmers' condition does not seem to be improving as much as we would wish. I am also glad that Opposition parties have now come forward for the first time to ask for parity between agriculturalists and non-agriculturalists, between agricultural prices and non-agricultural prices. Today there is unanimity among all members of Parliament as well as all political parties. It may be because the elections are coming very soon and they have to go back to the people. Therefore, they must speak in the interest of the people in order to get their support. Once they come back here, what will happen? Even some of the members on the Treasury Benches have to be at the mercy of the bureaucracy, banks and other forces which are behind them, with the result that the farmers' condition seems not to improve as much as the private members on the ruling side themselves wish for. Even in those days, when Choudhary Charan Singh became the Finance Minister and later the Prime Minister and when the Janata Party was in power, the position was just the same. For a very long time, I have been asking for agricultural prices to be fixed by the Government and for the appointment of a Commission to fix these prices. As Mr. Rathod has informed the House just now, at long last the Agricultural Prices Commission came to be established, but there were no non-official

members in it. With great difficulty, we were able to make the Government and the bureaucracy agree to appoint one non-official member, afterwards to increase the number to two and now at long last, to three. Then we also wanted at least one of these members to represent agricultural labour. Till today, it has not been acceded. Even when Indira Gandhiji was about to go to Swarg, they tried to resist her decision to have the name changed from Agricultural Prices Commission to Agricultural Costs and Prices Commission. After the present Prime Minister came in, we are able to see that the name continues to be the same, that is, Agricultural Costs and Prices Commission. One might say what is there in a name. But once the word 'costs' is included in the name, you have got to take into consideration the costs of the agricultural produce and thereafter the prices which could be paid by the consumers, so that there will be some balance between the two and justice is done to all. Therefore, it must be the Agricultural Costs and Prices Commission only. But then, who are the members and how do they function? It is the same bureaucracy which prepares the base. The non-official members only suggest certain things or give their minutes of dissent or what may be called 'notes'. Well, the notes take care of themselves and the Minister need not bother! Whatever the official members decide upon, is being accepted and acted upon. After the new Ministers have come in, there has been some slight change. But it is more a matter of courtesy.

Therefore, something has got to be done in regard to this. A lot has been said by so many of our members. They say, "Should not the farmers be paid remunerative prices? Not only that, should they not get a living wage and a living which would be honourable and social?" But today it is not so. Something has got to be done very quickly so that people would not accuse us of saying it only for the sake of elections. Then, how are we going to achieve this parity? Just now our friends have referred to it. And again and again, we have been repeating it. A farmer's son is willing to go as a peon, as a

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sewer for stitching the sacks of wheat and rice. He prefers that work. Why? Because, he is paid much more. He is looked after in every possible manner. There are insurance schemes for him. Credit also is being offered to him at a concessional rate. How long do you think that the farmers would be able to carry on their work or put up with this kind of miserable existence? All of us agree on that. But when it comes to doing it, we are not able to carry conviction with the bureaucracy. Who are the bureaucrats? They are our own sons and daughters. Once they go into it, they begin to think in different terms. So, the scales have got to be settled properly. How to do it? We wanted credit to be made available to our farmers. Then come various gradations, concessions here and there. But at what rate of interest? Without taking into consideration the rate of inflation, whether it is 5,000, 10,000, 20,000 and so on, the concessions are given. After that, they seem to think that the farmer will become a rich man if he is not charged interest at the rate of 15 per cent or 16 per cent. Mr. Rathod has told just now that if we want to have a *jhonpri* even the zinc sheets are to be auctioned in order to repay the loans.

Recently, we have had to plead with the Government for the abolition of penal rate of interest. In the end, they went back again to the ancient practice and said in a desperate manner that repayment should not be more than 100 per cent at any rate. But in the meanwhile, the compound interest is being charged. All these things have got to go. Simple interest has got to be insisted upon and the rate of interest has got to be as reasonably low as is possible. That is not being done.

We have been able to abolish civil debtors' jails but at the same time the decrees are being taken against our farmers and their properties are being auctioned. We have got to take a decision that agricultural lands ought not to be auctioned for repayment of crop loans or for payments which are pending because of bad seasons. Some

clear or definite decisions have got to be taken and have to be imposed.

Then, there are cooperatives. The elections must be held but they should be free and fair. Once the elections are held and cooperatives come into action, then there should not be any official oppression or official control over them—whoever may be the Minister, whichever Party he may belong to. That is not the position today. Once you fix the prices, where is the guarantee that it would be sold at that price and not less and there would not be any distress sales? Therefore, I plead for a Joint Committee of the Cabinet under the Chairmanship of the Minister for Agriculture including the representatives of the Ministries of Irrigation, Finance and Commerce, Power etc.

Today, there is trouble for tobacco growers in Andhra Pradesh. A minimum price was fixed with the consent of the traders at Rs. 22/- per kg. They bid only for Rs. 15/- or something like that and not more. It was supposed to be an open market. There was nobody else to buy and the farmers were obliged to sell because they were badly in need of money not only for their own maintenance but for the repayment of crop loans and so on. Therefore, they were in distress. So is the case with people who are growing coconut, cotton and various other commodities. You take the case of potatoes in Himachal Pradesh, then onions in Maharashtra. It goes on like that.

Therefore, there must be a complete harmonious working, understanding among the Agriculture Ministry, the Finance Ministry and the Commerce Ministry so that the moment a complaint comes, a serious complaint comes, of any distress sale or the failure of the market to pay the minimum price fixed by the Government, then this Sub-Committee of the Cabinet should go into action and they should direct the State Trading Corporation to go into the market and offer to purchase these things. Only that kind of an arrangement will work in favour of the farmer and against these traders.

Similarly, in regard to water, for instance, more and more irrigation is needed for larger area. Now, the Irrigation Ministry is going in its own way. Therefore, that Sub-Committee of the Cabinet has got to be there under the leadership of the Agriculture Ministry. The food industries are coming in. They have also got to be brought into this just as you have brought a number of Ministries under Human Resources Ministry. Here, similarly, there should be the re-organisation of our Cabinet system so that the Agriculture Minister would become the centre of that fulcrum.

Now, having done that, how to get remunerative prices to be fixed up and then to be paid? These urban people refuse to pay anything more? But, at the same time, only the other day, the bank people threatened to go on strike. Higher salaries were granted to them. Every one else is being given higher salaries. At whose cost? They were given at the cost of agriculturists. This imbalance has got to be corrected.

I am glad that our new Prime Minister, during the last four years, has been educating himself about the sufferings, about the needs, about the kind of life our farmers are carrying on. Therefore, he has come to be quite alive to their needs. So, he has been turning the scale more and more in favour of agriculturists, but it is not enough. He has got to assert himself; he cannot do it by himself. The whole of the Party has got to assert itself. A new orientation is needed. Unless that kind of a new orientation comes to be exhibited in actual evidence long before the elections, indeed half way between one election and another, it would not be possible for us of to get any kind of justice done to our farmers.

My hon. friend, a Communist Member, made a suggestion that there should be a minimum wage fixed for agricultural workers; that is very badly needed. When you cannot implement a minimum price, how is it possible for you to implement the minimum wage? But how can there be any minimum wage at all unless a labour representative is

there on the Agricultural Costs & Prices Commission? That is the reason why I wanted all the time to have a representative on behalf of the agricultural workers on this Commission so that these official members would be made aware of the demands being made for a living wage for agricultural workers? Based upon that, minimum wage for the farmer should be fixed; his own labour and contribution for his own supervision should be fixed; then for both of them. At least one employment insurance scheme should also be there; complete employment for the whole year for one male member at least in every family should be there; one who owns the land; one who does not own the land but yet works on the land; these three calculations have got to go into the making of the figure for agricultural costs; and once you reach that agricultural cost, you have got to put it to the society as a whole on behalf of the Government: "Are you willing to pay for it or not? If you are not willing to pay for it, if you want any reduction, are you agreeable for any reduction in your emoluments, in your salary, allowances, pension and all the rest?" You are not willing. Therefore, agree to this. That is the only way in which we can argue with these urban people, with these professional people, with this bureaucracy and the rest of them. Now, are we going to do it? The time has come when we have got to do it, and I hope under the leadership of our Prime Minister and our Ministers in charge of Agriculture, and all those others who will be associated with them in the Cabinet Sub-Committee that I am suggesting, we would be able to carry conviction to our urban masses.

Then I would like to take up two points on which there seems to be some disagreement. My hon. friend from Bihar was talking of big landlords. Where are the big landlords after the ceiling law? Is not Mitakshari law applicable there? If a farmer has got three sons, is not the farm being split up into four holdings? Then, within just two generations, these forty years, does it not come down? Has it not come down? If it has not come down, there is something wrong between their administration and those people who

[Prof. N.G. Ranga]

are in power there, in their legislatures and behind the Ministers and so on, otherwise the ceiling law and the Mitakshari law, both of them are bound to bring down the extent of land that a farmer owns and cultivates.

Then, secondly, we have learnt in those days when there were zamindari systems, when I was leading also all our friends there against the Zamindari system and we were inveigling against landlordism. That landlordism has gone. Today it is all small holdings and below the ceiling. Then, as far as these people are concerned, look at Russia. All those Communist friends were so very angry with me, when I was standing up for the farmers. I was against their support for the 17th Amendment to the Constitution aimed against our peasants that was being proposed at that time from this side and I had to part company with my friends on this side and go there and be the head of an Opposition Party in order to fight against the 17th Amendment. We fought it. Thanks to Jawaharlal Nehru's loyalty to the conception of democracy, in the end, he said, "All right, we have fought enough. Let us come to an agreement." We reached an agreement and we saved our self employed farmers here in our country, whereas there in Soviet Russia their Motherland, or God only knows what the has happened. Soviet Russia witnessed the butchery of millions of farmers, our brethren. Now their collective graves are being opened up and they find in them the skeletons of millions and millions of peasants people. In India, our democracy has saved us from that misery. We have been able to triumph against that fate. Our farmers are saved from that kind of a fate and they are assured of their holdings. But there, even now they are not so sure of the continuance of their holdings. Even here, so long as these banks are given the power to put their land to auction and threaten them with the loss of their land holdings—and that is why the relations between the banks on the one side and the farmers on the other have got to be put on a more rational basis and I hope that our friends in charge of the Ministry, Bhajan

Lalji and Yadavji, would be able to succeed in this direction.

We need more fertilizers and were also insecticides. They are a must for the protection of the crops. Plant protection and discovery of new plants are to be developed. We have yet to construct sufficient number of warehouses in order to preserve these things. We have got to minimise the losses that the country is incurring through bad management or through the effect of bad seasons on our warehousing and grain storage. Then we have also to improve the processing side of our agriculture and the preparation of our agricultural products for the market. In all these directions, the Government is moving, but not fast enough, the Government is moving rightly but not spiritedly. I would like them to move much faster and more spiritedly. We want green revolution. We have been able to achieve a part of it. So much more of it has got to be achieved. And in that direction, we want the grand old conception of Dr. K.L. Rao and various other people for taking the Ganga water right down to the fulfilment of the Cauveri. Thousands of crores of rupees would be needed for this. We are now borrowing from other countries and we are raising it in our own country also. With the cooperation of our farmers and other people, we should be able to raise those funds—not through taxation alone, through taxation a part of it—through efficient management at the Government level and minimising the Government and from the savings of our own people. Farmers themselves could be persuaded to set apart two per cent or one per cent of the sale price which they are able to obtain in order to build up necessary funds for taking water along the way right down to villages and preventing all surplus river water and flood water from going into the sea on one side and preventing it from destroying our crops on the other side. And in that way, we can increase the total percentage of the irrigated land in our country. We can also make the Jaldhara conception of our Prime Minister a much greater success so that the water table could be raised by the construction of lakhs of tanks all over India.