

effective places where people can go and complain if they are in difficulty.

Construction of Godowns

*432. DR. A.K. PATEL:
SHRI PYARELAL KHANDEL-
WAL:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating construction of a network of godowns in the country to prevent distress sale of farm products; and

(b) if so, the outlines of the proposal?

[Translation]

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI DEVI LAL): (a) The provision of a country-wide network of godowns forms part of the Action Plan announced by the Government of India on the 1st January, 1990.

(b) Following the announcement of the Action Plan, the status of warehousing facilities available in the country and storage requirements of different agricultural commodities along with other related issues of infrastructure for marketing of agricultural produce were examined in detail. In order to have optimum utilisation of the existing capacities and to create new capacities required, the State Governments have been requested to make detailed surveys and identify the gaps. These exercises would help in proper prioritisation and effective implementation of the existing scheme, which has been in operation since 1979 in collaboration with the State Governments.

[English]

DR. A.K. PATEL: The farmers do not get remunerative prices and they are subject to difficulties often. I congratulate the hon. Minister for providing facilities for the sur-

rounding countries. I would like to know from the hon. Minister how many godowns will be constructed State-wise and the *modus operandi* for it.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVI LAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government has constructed many warehouses and godowns for the storage of foodgrains so that farmers may get remunerative price of their produce. 446 godowns have been constructed in Andhra Pradesh for which assistance of Rs. 2 crore and 67 lakh has been given by the Central Government. There are 10 godowns in Assam having capacity of 25,000 metric tonnes for which an assistance of Rs. 66 lakh has been provided by the Centre. There are 156 godowns in Bihar for which assistance of Rs. 1 crore 64 lakh has been granted by the Centre. 5 godowns are in Goa where assistance of Rs. 9 lakh has been granted by the Centre. Gujarat has 866 godowns for which Rs. 4 crore 70 lakh have been provided by the Centre. In Haryana there are 65 godowns for which Centre has given assistance of Rs. 11 lakh. There are 29 godowns in Kerala for which Rs. 52 lakh have been given by the Centre. The number of godowns in Karnataka is 446 for which Rs. 2 crore 10 lakh have been provided by the Central Government. Madhya Pradesh has 468 godowns and assistance provided by the Government is Rs. 2 crore 35 lakh. The number of godowns in Maharashtra is 828.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Patel, do you want to know the details of godowns in all the States?

SHRI DEVI LAL: But I want to furnish this information so that members coming from different states may know the arrangements being made by this Government. There are 20 godowns in Mizoram for which Rs. 20 lakh have been provided by the Centre. 137 godowns are in Orissa for which an assistance of Rs. 78 lakh has been given by the Centre. There are 138 godowns in Rajasthan for which an assistance of Rs. 67 lakh has been granted. 17 godowns are in Sikkim

for which Rs. 26 lakh have been granted by the Centre. Rs. 1 crore 11 lakh have been granted by the Government to Tamil Nadu for 111 godowns. There are 91 godowns in Tripura where Rs. 2 crore 18 lakh have been granted by the Centre. 528 godowns are in Uttar Pradesh for which Rs. 7 crore 17 lakh have been granted by the Centre. There are 59 godowns in West Bengal for which Rs. 27 lakh have been provided by the Centre. Thus, the Central Government has given Rs. 33 crores 43 lakh to different states by way of grant for the safe storage of the foodgrains of the farmers.

[English]

DR. A.K. PATEL: My second supplementary is this: What will be the modus operandi of these godowns?

[Translation]

SHRIDEVI LAL: The objective of these godowns is very simple that Government tries to help the farmers to store as much quantity of their produce as they desire, so that they may be able to get remunerative price of their produce. They can sell their produce at the time when they can get good price for it. Arrangements are made subject to the availability of the foodgrains.

SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, just now hon. Minister said that there are hundreds of godowns all over the country where farmers can store their produce but even then shortage of godowns is being felt in the country. Therefore, when agricultural output reaches the market, farmer has to sell it at low rates under duress because they don't have adequate capacity for storage of their produce. I want to know from the hon. Minister the number of godowns construction of which was started by the cooperative societies or Oopaj Mandi Samities (Agricultural Produce Market Societies) and other rural organisation last year, the number of godowns under construction till date, as also that of those godowns, which are proposed to be constructed during the

next year so that farmers may store their produce therein.

SHRIDEVI LAL: Hon. Member wants to know the number of godowns proposed to be constructed in the country where farmers can store their produce safely. I am making all efforts in this direction and there is a proposal also. If you want to know the storage capacity, district-wise or state-wise, then I will require notice.

SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, my question is very simple, that is, how many godowns are under construction at present.

MR. SPEAKER: You may reply, if you so like.

(Interruptions)

SHRI DEVI LAL: I am prepared to answer questions even beyond the brief with me. But you should know that the Ministers are briefed for one hour by and the secretaries and other officers of the Ministry who have experience of 15 years or more. We rely to a large extent on the brief given to us by those officers. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: If all of you are interested in it, then I will call you one by one.

[English]

PROF. N.G. RANGA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Himachal Pradesh, North-eastern States as well as Maharashtra produce quite a number of perishable products like potatoes etc. It is necessary to provide preservation facility. I do not know whether any serious effort is being made to provide all these godowns with such facility. I would like to know whether the Government are thinking of providing such facilities and, if so, how much money is being sanctioned.

In addition to that, I wish to add and I appreciate the symbolic importance given to agriculture by my hon. friend the Deputy Prime Minister himself by choosing this Minis-

try of Agriculture instead of choosing some other popular so-called Ministry I congratulate him for that

[*Translation*]

SHRI DEVILAL Mr Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to Prof N G Ranga, for raising this issue I agree with Prof Ranga that warehouses should be constructed at every 15 kilometres distance so that the farmers may store their produce in these warehouses and whenever the price increases, they may sell it at a higher price This is in our mind and we are making efforts in this direction In comparison to earlier plan we are now formulating plan under which warehouses would be constructed at every 15 kilometres distance, so that the farmers may store their produce in them

SHRI RAM SINGH Mr Speaker, Sir the hon Minister, mentioned right now that warehouses were being constructed for providing storage facilities to the farmers The farmer too has family responsibilities like the marriage of his children and he needs money to spend to discharge these responsibilities and he is, therefore forced to sell his produce at a cheaper price I would like to know whether the Government proposes to make some arrangements for providing financial help to the farmers to avoid such a situation and enable them to incur expenditure on such occasions and sell their stored produce whenever it fetches remunerative price and repay the money advanced to them Is the Government considering some steps in this regard also?

SHRI DEVILAL Mr Speaker, Sir, we also want to do something like this so that the farmers are able to store their produce in the warehouses and are able to get credit against it. This will enable him to maintain himself and his family and sell his produce whenever the prices are remunerative We also want to give the maximum price to the farmers We are conducting a survey to set up warehouses at a distance of every 15 kms We are planning to construct warehouses with a capacity of 14 lakh tonnes each Very soon,

we will be receiving information from the States in this regard and on that basis, we will be able to complete our task with their cooperation

[*English*]

DR THAMBI DURAI Sir, our Deputy Prime Minister is the champion for the cause of farmers in India Our Indian farmers are the hard-working people Just now, our Rangaji said that farmers were producing lot of vegetables, fruit, flowers etc, apart from the foodgrains The main problem that they are facing is the lack of cold storage facility and also transporting these food items to the cold storage centres or godowns Thus, the farmers are lacking in such facilities As he succeeded in collecting milk and taking it to the cold storage centres by way of 'Operation Flood' is there any proposal to have so many cooperative societies to collect all these farm products and taking it to the cold storage chillin centres where they can store all these products? Now-a-days cooperative movement is weakening in India and this is the only solution for the success of collecting the products, preserving them and marketing them at right times I want to know from the Minister whether there is any proposal to strengthen the cooperative movement and also to have more cold storage centres

[*Translation*]

SHRI DEVILAL As far as cold storage facilities are concerned we want to establish cold storage facilities at various places for cash crops There is proposal to establish cold storage facilities in big cities on an experimental basis We want to establish agro-based industries to process the cash crops, grown in the 40 kilometre area around Delhi, so that the farmers are benefited Our endeavour is to provide cold storage facilities to them We want to set up cold storage facilities, with the latest technology for onions and potatoes We propose to make arrangements for their demonstration to the farmers, so that they may benefit from them I have been allotted a very big bungalow Instead of growing grass, I will set up a

nursery there so that each member may see it and take the technique to his constituency.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has said right now that the F.C.I. has plans to construct warehouses with a capacity of 14 lakh tonnes. May I know the present capacity of our warehouses and also whether that capacity is being fully utilised? May I also know whether the F.C.I. still takes warehouses on hire?

SHRI DEVI LAL: Despite the arrangements being made by the F.C.I., warehouses are unable to provide space for sixty per cent of the produce. We are making efforts to provide more facilities to our farmers to enable them to have the maximum benefit.

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the existing capacity of the warehouses of the Food Corporation of India is so short that thousands tonnes of foodgrains is left outside and is destroyed. Keeping this in view, if people built warehouses, according to the prescribed standards with their own money, will the Government take them on rent and will the Government provide loan facilities to the people for this purpose?

SHRI DEVI LAL: At present, we have warehouses with a total capacity of 56 lakh tonnes. We want to build warehouses with a capacity of 14 lakh tonnes so that maximum facilities are made available to the farmers and they may get a fair price for their produce.

[English]

SHRI LOKANATH CHOUDHARY: I want to know whether the Government is very interested to give remunerative prices to peasants. I would also like to know whether the Government by this time has assessed as to what will be the number and what will be the preserving capacity of godowns in this country. Has the Government assessed it? If the Government has not assessed it, then I will ask whether the Minister will do this, will assess the requirements and at the same

time say by what time they will be able to extend these facilities to the cultivators.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVI LAL: Our endeavour is to construct the maximum number of godowns, through the Department of Rural Development and to provide more facilities to the farmers. In this regard, our progress would depend on the capacity we create. We have to look to our financial position also. Our endeavour is to see that the 50 per cent of the expenditure on this account is in the form of grants.

[English]

SHRI D.M. PUTTE GOWDA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the quality of a large quantity of foodgrains stored in the godowns is deteriorating due to the out-dated types of godowns present in the country. I want to ask the Government and the Minister concerned as to what steps they are going to take to modernise these godowns on a par with those of the developed countries.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVI LAL: We have asked the State Governments to prepare a plan according to which 50 per cent of the expenditure will be met by the State Governments and an assistance of 50 per cent will be provided by the Central Government so that we succeed in this modernisation work as early as possible.

[English]

S.T.D. Facility in Maharashtra

*436. **SHRIBALASAHEB VIKHEPATIL:** Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of towns in Maharashtra connected with STD facility till 31 January, 1990;

(b) whether Government have any