

SHRI P.M. SAYEED : May I know whether the statement given by Johel Sahab is wrong ?

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : What can I say about the statement ? I am giving you the data. The Chairman might have said but it has not come to my notice. I have not seen it. You give me in writing, I will look into it and remove the deficiency, if found. Production of paddy seed was more than the demand. It was about 1 lakh 78 thousand quintal. The production of wheat seed was more than 3 lakh quintal. Similarly, the seed of Maize and Jowar was in surplus. As regards millet, there are some difficulties. The millet is mainly produced in Gujarat and due to drought for the last 2 to 3 years there, production of millet has been slightly less.

SHRI YASHPAL SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister of Agriculture furnishing figures has accepted that the cost of production of seeds is higher than the rates on which these are supplied to the farmers. Can he say such things as a farmer also ? As a small farmer, I also agree that the cost of production of seeds is more, but I can say that the seed is supplied to the farmers at very high rates by the National Seed Corporation and other seed supplying agencies. There is a scope and they are competent to reduce these rates. I had been Agriculture Minister in one State and tried my best to bring down the rates of seeds during my tenure. I believe that the rates may be brought down if steps are taken in this regard.

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, National Seed Corporation and other State Seed Farms produce seeds in very small quantity. The Government agencies produce only around 2 lakh quintal of seed. Rest of the seed is produced by farmers privately. The Government only certifies it. The profit is pocketed by farmers themselves. The Government does not earn any profit. Question of earning profit does not arise as the seed is supplied on no profit no loss basis to the farmers. State Governments also maintain their seed farms. They produce good quality of seed and supply it to the farmers.

SHRI RAMASHRAY PRASAD SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the position regarding the

production of seeds explained by the hon. Minister is practically correct. I agree that production of seeds involves considerable expenditure. Being mainly an agricultural country, may I know why the Government do not propose to enhance the production of seeds in the interest of agricultural advancement and for boosting agricultural production in the country ? Why are the Government agencies producing seeds in such a low quantity ?

MR. SPEAKER : He has already replied to it.

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have already made it clear with data that the Government is quite conscious and want to encourage agriculture in the country. As you know, besides the availability of good quality of seeds, manures and fertilizers to encourage agriculture, assistance from universities is also made available so that the farmers utilise the know-how and increase their production. As regards irrigation, the Government is supplying power and making available the tubewells facility so that the farmers may have the maximum benefit.

Package of Concessions for Farmers

*265. †**SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN :**

SHRI SHARAD DIGHE :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the concessions announced by the Prime Minister for farmers while inaugurating the 25th Conference of Bharat Krishak Samaj held recently ;

(b) the time by which these concessions will be given ; and

(c) the annual cost on account of these concessions ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV) : (a) to (c). A Statement is given below.

Statement

(a) Prime Minister in his Inaugural

Speech in the 25th Conference of the Bharat Krishak Samaj referred to several concessions given to the farmers because of the drought/flood in the current year. These are :

For borrowers affected by flood/drought for three or more years in succession :

- (1) deferment of principal and interest of short-term loans converted/rescheduled as medium-term loans ;
- (2) conversion and reschedulement facility to the affected borrower for a period of seven years with two years moratorium. The loans borrowed would be rescheduled over ten years ;
- (3) banks shall not charge penal interest on loans upto Rs. 25,000 borrowed during three or more years of consecutive drought/flood ;
- (4) no compound interest on dues converted/rescheduled.

For borrowers affected by current years' or two consecutive years crop failure :

- (1) Crop loans of 1986-87 of affected farmers would be rescheduled as seven years loan.
- (2) Loans of 1987-88 would be converted into five year loan and interest would be deferred till next year in case of small farmers.

Besides, it was indicated that in respect of crop loans of small and marginal farmers total interest shall not exceed the principal.

(b) Reserve Bank of India and NABARD have issued instructions on these points.

(c) Figures relating to cost of these concessions for the financing institutions are not available as these concessions are individual farmer oriented and such records are not maintained at the level of Government of India.

SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN : First of all, I would like to thank the hon. Prime Minister for announcing certain concessions to the farmers while inaugurating

25th Conference of the Bharat Krishak Samaj. I would like to know from the hon. Minister in this regard as to why the concessions and facilities announced have not been implemented so far and what steps are being taken by the Government for their early implementation ?

SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV : Reserve Bank of India and NABARD have issued instructions regarding these concessions and, therefore, these are being implemented.

SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN : It is true that instructions have been issued but they have not been implemented yet. I would like the hon. Minister to pay attention to it. As regards my second supplementary, I would like to invite the attention of the Government towards the recovery of the loans from the farmers. The procedure is so strict that sometimes the fields of the farmers are attached in default of payment. This situation prevails in every State including Rajasthan. Farmers' fields are attached as land revenue. Not only this, they are to pay the interest equivalent to two, three or four times of the principal. They are forced to pay. Concessions announced by the Prime Minister while inaugurating the Conference are meant for the small farmers and marginal farmers. But the condition of other farmers of rural areas is similar to those of the small farmers. Nationalised and Cooperative Banks are charging double or triple interest. May I know whether the Government propose to announce certain concessions for them also ?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BHAJAN LAL) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the farmers would be much benefited by the concessions announced by hon. Prime Minister in the crowded meeting, presided by you, at Hyderabad. The hon. Member has said that the concessions have not been implemented, even the action has not been initiated in this regard. I would like to tell for his information that instructions have already been issued. You can get it verified from the people when you meet them on your next visit. That portion of the interest which exceeds the principal amount has been waived for the small and marginal farmers. If the interest and the principal amount of one thousand rupees is accumulated as Rs. 3000, one thousand rupees of interest shall be ex-

empted. In any case, the interest will never be more than the amount of the principal even if it was taken ten or twenty years back. It is applicable to all. He said that the fields of the farmers are attached on account of non-payment of loans. The recovery of outstanding loan is made as land revenue arrears. There is provision of attachment under it. It is a State subject. Government of India is not much in the picture in this matter. But I would like to inform the House, especially to Shri Virdhi Chander Jain, who belongs to Rajasthan where the people have been facing drought for the last three or four years, that the hon. Prime Minister has decided that loans recoverable in three years shall be recovered in seven years and that too in easy instalments in those areas which are drought-stricken for the last two years. But for the States affected by drought for the last three years, the period of recovery of loans shall be ten years. The loans recoverable in six months shall be recovered in three years, those recoverable in three years shall be recovered in seven years and the long term loans will be recovered in ten years in stead of seven years. As regards interest, I have already said that total interest shall not exceed the principal and the excess amount shall be exempted. Interest rate has been reduced to 10 per cent from $11\frac{1}{2}\%$ or $12\frac{1}{2}\%$. The reduction in the price of fertilizers is also one of the relief measures announced for the benefit of farmers. We have provided every sort of relief. You have seen how excellent a Budget has been presented by the Government of India.

SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN : What instructions the Government propose to issue in regard to the farmers ruined by the drought and about attachment of their lands ?

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : This is a State subject. After examining the drought-prone areas, we will advise State Governments not to attach the lands of the farmers belonging to drought affected areas.

[English]

SHRI E. AYYAPU REDDY : Sir, let me congratulate you on your scintillating and inspiring speech made by you at that conference.

The written answer is very misleading.

For example, he has stated :

“Besides it was indicated that in respect of crop loans of small and marginal farmers, total interest shall not exceed the principal.”

That is what is written. Under Clause No. 4, it is stated that :

“Those borrowers affected by current year or two consecutive years' crop failure”.

Probably, this will apply to marginal and small farmers only if they are affected by current drought or two years' consecutive drought. That means it is qualified. If they are not affected by current drought or two consecutive years' drought, they will not be entitled to this benefit. Kindly make it clear that this benefit will apply to all marginal and small farmers irrespective of the fact whether they are affected by one year drought or two years' drought. Then this will apply to all farmers, whether they are affected or not. This principle that they should not collect more than 100% of the principal was adumbrated even in 1937 under Shri Rajagopalachari's Government in the Southern State of Madras under the Madras Agricultural Relief Act. Will you kindly extend the same principle to all farmers that they shall not pay more than the principal as interest ?

[Translation]

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : Hon. Speaker, Sir, I have already told that if interest exceeds the principal amount, then the interest in excess to the principal amount shall not be recovered either from the farmers in drought-affected areas or from the small farmers.

MR. SPEAKER : What is the definition of a big farmer ?

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : Only he can tell it.

MR. SPEAKER : If height is the consideration, then I am a big farmer.

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : He should not have surplus land. There is Land Ceiling Act and this Act is Statewise. There is a ceiling of 75 hectares of land in Punjab and

Haryana.

MR. SPEAKER : What do you think about the farmer having 75 hectares of land ?

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : I don't consider him a big farmer. Although he is certainly big in comparison to farmers having one or two hectares of land.

MR. SPEAKER : Farmer having two hectares of land is bigger than the farmer having one hectare and farmer having three hectares is bigger than that having two hectares.

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : It is defined by the law. If somebody has 100 acres of land, then it will be asked as to why his surplus land was not acquired.

MR. SPEAKER : Why it was not acquired ?

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : Acquisition of surplus land is the function of the State Government. In our country, courts have granted stay orders in respect of 15 lakh acres of land. What the Government can do if one gets stay order by the court ? There is no negligence on the part of the Government. It is a State subject. Government of India frequently writes to the States for implementing the Land Ceiling Act and for distribution of surplus land to the landless and the poor.

[*English*]

PROF. N.G. RANGA : I am congratulating you.

MR. SPEAKER : I will give you a chance. Let Shri K.P. Singh Deo put his question.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Arising out of the reply given by the hon. Minister, specially with reference to Mr. Ayyapu Reddy's question, saying that it will be a matter dealing mostly with the States, how did the Centre propose to get it implemented by the States ? What are the steps taken by the Centre to see that the States implement the promise held out by the Prime Minister in his concessions to Rajasthan and whether it will also be applicable to the other States which are going through the

continuous drought, floods and cyclones ?

[*Translation*]

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have already explained in detail. We have written to the State Governments. The Central Government writes to the State Governments in accordance with the policy framed by it to enable them to implement the policy in the interests of the farmers and other people. We also remind and warn the State Government which does not implement the policy formulated by the Centre.

AN HON. MEMBER : What kind of warning do you issue ?

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : We warn them to implement the policy in the interest of the people.

Instructions have been duly issued to all the banks. Reserve Bank of India has been instructed to implement it forcefully.

[*English*]

PROF. N.G. RANGA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to congratulate you as the Chairman of the Bharat Krishak Samaj and also the Prime Minister for the statement of Government policy he has made and it was a good statement. But I am not satisfied with the quantum of concessions that he has made, although I welcome those concessions. For instance, the Prime Minister was wrongly advised when he said that the Government would wait for as long as three years of crop failures before the farmers would be given relief from the debt burden. That is after having continuously suffered for three years : Many farmers have had such experience only once in the last century according to the Government's own statement. Therefore, we have to wait for three or more years in succession to get this relief. It should be available after only two years. If you have drought continuously for two years, that means, loss of four crops. If they go on failing and if the farmers manage to survive the failure of their crops over two years, the Government should be prepared to come forward and then given them necessary relief—first, relief from the debt burden. That is not at all satisfactory. I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether the Government would remember 1937-38 about the application of the principle of

Damdapat, that is the cancellation of excess interest burden above 100% of the original debt. The Government's advisers seemed to be ignorant of the fact that as long ago as 1953, Shri Rajaji had implemented this principle. In fact, Rajiv had then to remind the lawyers about the existence of this principle of *Damdapat* in the law books and he then got it implemented. That debt relief legislation has been accepted throughout India. Therefore, no new concession is there in Prime Minister's statement so far as cancellation of debt burden above 200 per cent is concerned. What is needed is that as soon as two years' crops have failed, Government should come forward to help the farmers in the way of *Damdapat*. Would the Government now reconsider their decision and be willing to come forward and then assure our farmers that their debt burdens for those four crops to the extent that they are in arrears, would be cancelled? That is the most important thing.

Secondly, so far as the Land Revenue is concerned, it is true that it is a State subject. But, surely, it must be possible for the Government of India to use their good offices and persuade the State Governments to relieve the farmers from this burden? Are the Government willing to give this advice and send their advisers all round the States and see that they give this relief to the farmers?

Thirdly, in regard to credit, the Reserve Bank of India is still pursuing the century-old reactionary policy of collecting every paisa, like *Shylock*, from our farmers. Would they give them proper advice in the light of the concessions, which were very good indeed, that were announced there in Hyderabad under your Presidency by the Prime Minister? I must congratulate you because for the first time in the history of India, the Prime Minister has gone to an accredited organisation of our farmers to make a statement in regard to the Government's policy on agriculture in the manner in which the Governments leaders used to do so far as the Chambers of Commerce were concerned.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : This is a good suggestion.

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : All his points... (Interruptions).

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : His question is :

[English]

Whether you will change the advisers or change the Government...

[Translation]

Please tell about it.

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : Mr. Madhu Dandavate, you are a very senior Member of the House. You have been trying for this for the last so many days but way your dreams are not going to be true. Mr. Speaker, Sir, Shri Ranga is a very senior and old Member of this House.

MR. SPEAKER : You should, therefore, accept all his suggestions.

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : He has given very good suggestions. The Government would consider all of them very sympathetically so that the farmers may be benefited.

SHRI PIYUS TIRAKY : What are the rates of interest on the loans which the Government takes from foreign countries? Is it possible or not to give loans to farmers by slightly increasing these rates? If not, the reasons therefore? Which are the States where land reforms have not been implemented? This is my second question.

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in your presence in Hyderabad, the Prime Minister has announced to reduce the rates of interest from Rs. 12.50 per cent to Rs. 11.50 per cent and from Rs. 11.25 per cent to Rs. 10.00 per cent. We have tried to extend all the facilities and concessions to farmers. As far as the law regarding land reforms is concerned, the Indian Government has time and again written to the State Governments to fully implement the Land Ceiling Act where it has not yet been implemented. But, Mr. Speaker, Sir, as you have stated, there are big farmers also at some places. Big farmers are those who...

MR. SPEAKER : I have said that those farmers should be considered as big farmers where the Land Ceiling has not been decided and those farmers should be considered as ordinary farmers where the Land Ceiling

has been declared.

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : The farmers are big where the Land Ceiling has not been implemented. The rest of the farmers are ordinary farmers.. (*Interruptions*). As regards interest I have already stated that the Government does not want to make any profit out of the loans given to the farmers. I want tell you the details of the loans distributed to the farmers in each year. In 1985-86, it was Rs. 6886 crores...(*Interruptions*). I have give you the figures. If you do not want to listen then I can not help it.

SHRI PIYUS TIRAKY : My question about the names of the States where land reforms have not been implemented has not been answered.

[*English*]

Wages to Workers under NREP and RLEGP

*266. †**SHRI GADADHAR SAHA :**

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the continuous reports of reports of those working under Government sponsored schemes like the National Rural Employment Programme and Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme not getting minimum wages in Bihar and other States ; and

(b) if so, the steps contemplated by the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) and (b). Complaints have been received by the Government alleging non payment of notified minimum wages and delayed payment of wages to labourers under rural employment programmes in some States. In all such cases, the State Governments concerned are invariably advised to take suitable action.

SHRI GADADHAR SAHA : Sir, it is very strange that hon. Minister has carefully

avoided to give specific answers to my specific questions. In his answer to my question (a) and (b), there is no mention of minimum rates of wages and irregularities committed and also there is no mention of names of particular States where rural workers are paid less and less than the minimum wages which does not take care of the poverty line. Also, it does not take care of the agreed decision taken in the 36th Session of State Labour Minister's Conference in 1987. (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER : He should have sent it to the Minister. The Minister could have replied by reading it.

{*English*}

You send the statement.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI GADADHAR SAHA : So, my specific question is what are the minimum rates of wages fixed by the State of Bihar and what is the rate of minimum wages agreed to by the State Labour Ministers' in their Conference held in New Delhi in 1987.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : Sir, so far as first part of the question of the hon. Member is concerned, the minimum wages fixed under the Minimum Wages Act in Bihar is Rs. 15.85. It is a State subject and the wages are to be fixed by the State Governments, and they have to notify under Minimum Wages Act. The names of the States where minimum wages are not paid or they have been paid less than the minimum wages are the States of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra Gujarat. West Bengal had also not been paying upto December, now they have rectified it.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Now it is Rs. 16/-. You don't know that. Recently it has been raised, three months back.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI GADADHAR SAHA : What are the major findings of the evaluation studies and surveys conducted by PEO and Labour Bureau about the shortcomings in implementation of the programmes of NREP and