

श्री प्रताप चन्द्र चन्द्र : इस तरह का कोई प्रस्ताव मेरे पास नहीं है ।

Mechanization of Agriculture

*410. SHRI P. K. KODIYAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) steps Government have taken to further mechanise agriculture.

(b) whether Government have taken concrete steps to increase the inputs in agriculture; and

(c) if so, the facts thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) Government have adopted a policy of selective mechanisation, which, without seriously affecting employment opportunities in agriculture, can help farmers to take to intensive cropping with higher yields from the same land. Most of the agricultural machinery required by farmers is being manufactured in the country. Since it is not possible for small farmers to own many such machines, agro-service centres and custom hiring centres are being set up for giving such machines on hire. Small and marginal farmers are provided subsidy on improved implements in selected areas under the Small Farmers' Development Agency Programme, Drought Prone Areas Programme and Tribal and Hill Areas Development Programme.

(b) and (c). Important steps taken by the Government to increase the availability and consumption of major inputs, namely, seeds, fertilizers and pesticides and irrigation water, are as follows:—

SEEDS

Keeping in view the expected increase in the requirement of quality

seeds for major cereal crops in the coming years, Government have evolved a national programme which seeks to integrate the various stages of seed production, from research institutions to farmers' fields, and provide necessary infrastructural facilities to cater to seed processing, storage, quality control and marketing. Under this programme, it is intended to broaden and diversify quality seed production and also to build up a reserve stock of seeds for use during periods of inadequate availability. Programmes are also being drawn up to strengthen the facilities for production of vegetable seeds and seeds of commercial crops.

FERTILISERS

To meet the rising demand for fertilisers, the total availability is being increased by expanding the level of production in the country and arranging necessary imports. The imported fertilisers are stored in over 600 buffer points in the country. Efforts are being made to open additional retail outlets in the interior areas, which now number about one lakh, so as to make fertilisers easily available to the cultivators. The State Governments are also being encouraged to set up composite input distribution centres, so that farmers may get seeds, fertilisers and pesticides under one roof, wherever possible. An Intensive Fertiliser Promotion Campaign has been taken up in the current kharif season in 68 selected districts, where the level of fertiliser consumption is low at present, but the potential for increasing the consumption is good.

PESTICIDES

The manufacturing capacity of the pesticides industry as well as consumption of pesticides has considerably increased over the years. All plant protection materials are, by and large, easily available within the country through approximately 52000 sales points. Subsidy under various schemes is being given to small and

marginal farmers for the purchase of plant protection equipments. Financial assistance for ground and aerial spraying against pests and diseases of commercial crops is also being extended to the farmers.

IRRIGATION

Realising the important role of irrigation programmes, efforts are being made to accelerate their implementation to the maximum extent possible. The Public Sector outlays are being supplemented by institutional funds in the case of minor irrigation. For 1977-78, it is expected that an additional irrigation potential of 1.79 million hectares from minor irrigation and 1.3 million hectares from major and medium irrigation would be created.

SHRI P. K. KODIYAN: Sir, the hon. Minister has made a written Statement. From the statement, I find that Government have adopted a policy of selective mechanisation, which, without seriously affecting employment opportunities in agriculture, can help farmers to take to intensive cropping with higher yields from the same land.

Now, Sir, we find in relation to mechanisation, that it is confined to a small section of the rural peasants. So far as ordinary peasants are concerned, they are not even getting the improved implements; they are not in a better financial position. Though in the statement it has been stated that agro-service centres are being set up to cater to the requirements of the small farmers, the fact is that a number of small marginal farmers in our country are denied the benefit of these modern agricultural implements. On the other hand, the mechanisation which is confined to selective areas often leads to unemployment among the agricultural workers.

So, my question is about the two aspects of mechanisation—use of agri-

cultural machines like the harvester combines in the State of Punjab and Haryana has often led to increase in unemployment among the rural workers. This is one aspect. The other aspect is the one to which I have referred just now, namely, the inability of the ordinary farmers, marginal farmers and other rural sections of the society, to use the improved agricultural implements.

I want to know whether Government are taking any serious steps in order to reduce the unemployment as far as possible....

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: If you go on extending this question, then the Question Hour will be over.

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA:

As my hon. friend has pointed out, I had mentioned that holdings all over the country are growing smaller and smaller; already we have about 13 million holdings with an area of 1 is equal to 2 hectares and 13 million holdings between 2 is equal to 5 hectares. That is why larger machines cannot be purchased by the farmers and operated by them. So we have started agro service centres. At present there are 2900 agro service centres from where they can hire machines. Similarly there are 310 centres of state agro industries corporation; they are also working. My hon. friend also pointed out about harvesting. Machines used in Punjab and Haryana and he says these cause the problem of unemployment of agriculture labour; that is incorrect. The machines are used to vacate the fields so that the next crop may be sown after that otherwise the season would be lost. People are in a hurry. In Punjab and Haryana there is no problem of unemployment of agriculture labour as such in harvesting season.

SHRI P. K. KODIYAN: With regard to agriculture inputs the hon. Minister has mentioned a series of steps. I want to know whether any steps are being taken to reduce the

additional irrigation potential proposed to be created in the next year from major irrigation is about 1.3 million hectares. Will the additional irrigation potential be utilised by the farmers fully?

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: So far as the first question is concerned, while replying to the debate in the House on the demands, I had mentioned that for this crop (i.e. Kharif) we are not in a position to reduce the price of fertilisers. However, we are keeping a watch on the prices. Regarding the second question, I have mentioned that about 3 million hectares of land is being brought under irrigation, small, medium and major. I shall see that maximum utilisation is made of this entire land under irrigation. Our effort is to utilise as much as possible all the existing irrigation facilities.

श्री शिव नारायण : मैं फूड मिनिस्टर से जानना चाहता हूँ कि यू० पी० में पिछली गवर्नमेंट ने रेट 3 रुपये से 15 रुपये कर दिया और उसके बाद चलते-चलते 12 रुपये किया। जो कि अब भी बहुत ज्यादा है। क्या मंत्री जी स्माल सेक्टर के अडैवलपमेंट, सिंचाई वगैरा की सुविधाएं छोटे-छोटे लोगों को बढ़ाने के लिये क्या इस रेट को कम करने की कृपा करेंगे ?

श्री सुरजीत सिंह बरनाला : यह प्रश्न मेरी समझ नहीं आया कि किस चीज का 11, 12 रुपये किया ?

श्री शिव नारायण : विजली के रेट के बारे में कहा है ।

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: That does not arise out of this question.

श्री दौलत राम सारण : कृषि सेवा केन्द्र कई जगह राज्य सरकारों द्वारा स्थापित किये गये हैं। मंत्री महोदय यह बताने की कृपा करें कि क्या यह सही है कि इन कृषि सेवा केन्द्रों से मिलने वाले कृषि यंत्रों के मूल्य

प्राइवेट तौर पर बेचने वालों के मूल्यों से अधिक हैं, जिसकी वजह से यहां से यंत्र खरीदना किसान को पौसाता नहीं है। क्या यह यंत्र वहां समय पर उपलब्ध भी नहीं होते हैं?

श्री सुरजीत सिंह बरनाला : यह मैं पता कर लूंगा, अगर ऐसी बात है तो।

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION

Discussion between U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. on limitation of Military activities in the Indian Ocean

+

S.N.Q. 15 DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI:
SHRI V. KISHORE CHANDRA
S. DEO:
SHRI CHITTA BASU:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item published in the *Statesman* of June 29, 1977 in which it has been reported that the Governments of U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. have discussed the question of limitation of military activities in the Indian Ocean region; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Indian Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government of India hope that the dialogue will continue and the participants will adopt a constructive and positive approach to the problem and achieve results which would facilitate the establishment of the Zone of Peace in the Indian Ocean in accordance with the U.N. resolutions.