

ASSISTANCE FOR EXPERIMENTAL FARM IN OMAN.

*604. SHRI M. S. SANJEEVI RAO
SHRI BANAMALI BABU :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to assist Oman Government to set up experimental farms in that country; and

(b) if so, the nature of assistance proposed to be given ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE) :

(a) The Embassy of India in Muscat has forwarded a proposal for collaboration with Sultanate of Oman in setting up an agricultural farm in Oman.

(b) It is proposed to depute a team of experts to Oman for preparation of the project report. The exact form and nature of assistance will be determined after the project report is prepared by the team of experts.

DIRECTIONS TO AGRICULTURAL PRICES COMMISSION TO FIX JUTE PRICES.

*605. SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the index number of whole-sale prices of raw jute and mesta has fallen down from 163 in December, 1972 to 123 in December, 1973 while the index number of whole-sale prices of other commodities has increased by 60 to 90 per cent of the corresponding period;

(b) in view of that, whether his Ministry has given any direction to the Agricultural Prices Commission, or otherwise referred the matter to the said Commission to consider the condition of jute growers and to fix the minimum

support price for jute in view of high cost of production, which should not be less than Rs. 250 per quintal and it should maintain the parity of price between paddy and jute which is in the ration of 3 : 1 i.e. 3 quintals of paddy is equal to 1 quintal of jute; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE) :

(a) The index of wholesale prices of raw jute and mesta declined from 162.8 in December, 1972 to 123.2 in December, 1973, while that of all commodities increased from 211.4 to 262.1 i.e., by 24 per cent.

(b) and (c) The guidelines for the determination of prices of agricultural commodities, including raw jute, are contained in the terms of reference of the Agricultural Prices Commission. No other specific guidelines for raw jute have been issued by the Ministry to the Commission. While recommending the support prices, the Commission generally take into account such factors as expenses of cultivation, prices of coming crops, prices of jute goods and international implications of charges in the prices of raw jute.

PROPOSAL FOR SUPPLY OF WHEAT IN LIEU OF ATTA/MAIZE AT FAIR PRICE SHOPS.

606. SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SINHA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the rationing authorities in Delhi have issued orders to its fair price shops to issue at least 25 per cent of the wheat quota in the shape of atta or maize;

(b) whether it is the choice of the ration card holder to ask atta or maize;