

being worked out but the programme can only be a model one, because the requirement is so vast and ultimately it is a question of increasing the standard of living of the people.

SHRI R. S. PANDEY : Both programmes should go together.

SHRI N. K. SINHA : Does the Minister know that despite the educational programmes which he is indulging in, *per capita* consumption of milk in the country has gone down from five ounces to three ounces ?

SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE : Availability of milk is increasing; population is increasing, also. That marginal difference is there. But this is a point which we are taking into consideration.

**Percentage of Population Dependent
on Land and Fall in per capita
availability of Land**

*1157. **SHRI N. K. SINHA :** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

Census year	Agricultural workers (in thousands)	Total workers (in thousands)	Percentage of agricultural workers to total workers
1961	131,048	188,572	69.5
1971 (Provisional)	126,012	183,605	68.6

Due to difference in the definitions of a "worker" followed in the population Censuses of 1961 and 1971, the above figures are not strictly comparable. For example housewives whose main activity is not agriculture are in 1971 Census not

(a) whether percentage of population depending upon agriculture has considerably increased during the last decade;

(b) whether *per capita* availability of land has gone down; and

(c) if so, the reaction of Government thereto ?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI
ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE) :** (a) to (c). A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

STATEMENT

(a) Information about population dependent on agriculture as such has not been collected under the population Censuses of 1961 and 1971. The following table, however, shows the number of agricultural workers (*i. e.* cultivators plus agricultural labourers), total number of workers, and the percentage of "agricultural workers" to "total workers" according to the 1961 Census and the provisional figures of 1971 Census :

shown in the category of agricultural workers. As such, it is difficult to draw conclusions from these figures. However, when the 1971 Census data are fully processed and analysed, it may be possible to make some comparison between the 1961 and 1971 figures.

(b) During the period 1960-61 and 1967-68 (the latest year for which All-India Land Utilisation Statistics are available), the cultivated area (*i. e.* net area sown plus current fallows) increased from 144.8 million hectares to 151.8 million hectares, *i. e.* by 4.8 per cent. However, due to higher order of increase in population, there was a decline in the *per capita* availability of land, so far as cultivated area is concerned.

(c) Due to limitations of bringing new areas under cultivation, stress is being laid, under development programme, on increasing the productivity of land and extension of area under multiple cropping to secure the targets of agricultural output.

SHRI N. K. SINHA : The question at (a) was slightly different. But it appears that there is no way to know the number of people depending on land even in this agricultural country. May I know from the hon. Minister whether he will try to make a provision for knowing the actual number of people dependent on agriculture during the 1971 census ?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE : The census have taken place. The data is being processed. After the data is processed, perhaps some of the precise figures may be known.

SHRI N. K. SINHA : The reply at (b) says that there was a decline in the *per capita* availability of land, so far as cultivated area is concerned. May I know from the hon. Minister whether this decline is due to addition of more acreage in the larger holding groups of the country because the ceiling laws in various States have not been implemented ? What does the Government mean in this respect by taking planning to the grass-root ?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE : The per head availability of land is altogether a separate problem, different from what are the different categories of holder s

—5 acres, 10 acres and 15 acres and so on. But broadly the figures indicate that as a result of increase in population despite the fact that there has been some expansion on area under cultivation, the per head availability has gone down and the figures available with me indicate that in 1968-69 the availability was 0.33 per hectare. Now it is reduced to 0.30 hectare.

SHRI N. K. SINHA : This he did not give in the original reply, but he is giving it only in the supplementaries.

MR. SPEAKER : Supplementaries sometimes elicit more information.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA : The percentage of population dependent on land and the low per head availability of land is mainly due to non-implementation of the land reforms strictly by this Government. Whether this Government would consider 'The land for the tiller' is still a dream ? Taking into consideration the failure of implementation of the land reforms, what effective steps is the Government of India going to take to put the tiller on the land ?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE : I have all respect to the hon. Member. But I would like to have his advice (*Interruptions*) The point is implementation of land reforms is an important and a vital subject and I appreciate the hon. Member's anxiety.

Now, the question here is a little different. It is about availability per head in relation to population. That is the question.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA : The relevancy of this question is in this way that because of the non distribution of surplus laid among the landless people and the still continuing strangle-hold of the big landlords who are holding large chunks of land, the result is the decline in the per

head availability of land. I want to know whether this aspect has been considered by this Government.

MR. SPEAKER : He told you about it.

SHRI DINESH CHANDRA GOSWAMI : In those States where mechanised farming and the habit of multiple cropping have not made any headway, what particular steps Government propose to take to encourage these habits? I am asking this question with particular reference to the State of Assam.

MR. SPEAKER : The question is about increase in population depending upon agriculture during the last decade and about the per head availability of land.

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE : The statement explains that how despite the increase in the acreage under cultivation, the per head availability of land has gone down. That is the point made in the Statement. If the hon. Member is interested in knowing something in relation to Assam from this angle, I am prepared to give him that information.

Increase in Price of Food Grains in North Bengal

*1158. SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the prices of foodgrains have gone very high in North Bengal area, firstly, because of presence of millions of Bangla Deah evacuees and secondly, for heavy rain and damages caused by floods;

(b) if so, whether Government will supply additional food, particularly rice, to Cooch-Bihar, Jalpaiguri and Maldah; and

(c) if so, the quantity of rice that will be supplied by the Food Corporation of India, with all details ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE) : (a) Rice is the principal foodgrain of mass consumption in West Bengal. Compared to last year, the prices of rice in North Bengal have been showing a mixed trend and are higher in certain centres and lower in certain others. Rise in prices is partly seasonal and partly due to influx of East Bengal refugees. There is no report of damage by flood and heavy rains in North Bengal districts.

(b) Supplies of foodgrains from the Central pool are made to the State Government for the State as a whole and not for individual districts. Arrangements are being made to meet the requirements of the State.

(c) For the year 1971, the Government of West Bengal have placed their requirement of rice from the Central pool at 8.25 lakh tonnes including the requirements for East Bengal refugees. This entire requirement will be met. The State's demand for wheat is received on a monthly basis and is also being met in full.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : In view of the hon. Minister's statement that the prices fluctuate at certain centres in certain places and they are abnormal in certain places, may I know whether he has made any study or asked the State of West Bengal to submit a study report on why the prices of foodgrains fluctuate from place to place? May I also know whether it is a fact that these fluctuations in the prices of foodgrains in certain districts in North Bengal are due to short supply of foodgrains? Has the hon. Minister made any study of this?