

Shortage of Pesticides

*453. SHRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for the acute scarcity of pesticides; and

(b) what steps have been taken to curb black market and high prices in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE): (a) and (b). Of the large number of pesticides which are used in commercial quantities in the country, shortage is being experienced in case of a few selected insecticides like BHC, DDT & Endrin. The main reason for the scarcity of BHC is on account of power cuts imposed on BHC manufacturing plants in different States and also partly due to non-availability of sufficient quantities of raw materials like chlorine. The position was slightly aggravated as a result of large-scale purchase of BHC for the National Malaria Eradication Programme. The Government of India have been taking steps to increase the volume of production of BHC by ensuring supply of raw materials like benzene and chlorine. With the power cuts now withdrawn, the manufacture of BHC will pick up. The present position in regard to manufacture of DDT is satisfactory, and the shortage in case of endrin is being relieved by quicker and larger imports.

There are no price controls over pesticides and price is governed by factors such as the incidence of pest attacks on epidemic scale, availability of substitutes, etc. The Government have been trying to keep the prices reasonable by ensuring adequate supplies which has to come out of increased production in case of indigenously manufactured pesticides and additional imports in case of those pesticides for which no manufacturing programme exists in the country. The increase in prices is also on account of increased

cost of production as the labour cost, price of containers, transport, etc., has also increased.

Probe into land grabbed in the Country

*455. SHRI YAMUNA PRASAD MANDAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government contemplate to probe land grab throughout the country in view of the important findings of the Harchand Committee report on land grab in Punjab; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE): (a) and (b). The Government of India has recently requested all the States and the Union Territories to report if any irregularities have occurred in the settlement of government land.

Salboni Dairy and Fodder Farm, Midnapore

*456. SHRI A. K. M. ISHAQUE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Salboni Dairy and Fodder Farm in Midnapore District, West Bengal is a scheme under 'Operation Flood';

(b) if so, where is Government machinery specifically located to implement the scheme; and

(c) what progress has so far been made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. SHER SINGH): (a) No, Sir. The Salboni Fodder Farm has been set up by the Government of West Bengal under their 4th Plan programme.

(b) The farm is functioning under the overall charge of an Agronomist of the State Department of Animal