

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) : (a) Yes, Sir. This suggestion was made by the Programme Evaluation Organisation of the Planning Commission in their report on the evaluation study of High-Yielding Varieties Programme for Kharif, 1967.

(b) and (c). Yes. The suggestion of the Planning Commission was given due attention in the selection of areas for the cultivation of the high-yielding varieties of cereals, particularly paddy, during Kharif 1968 in a number of States such as Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Mysore, West Bengal, Orissa and Kerala.

Settlement of Employees' Provident Fund Accounts

*402. SHRI SURENDRANATH DWIVEDY :
SHRI S. M. KRISHNA :

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of complaints of inordinate delays in final settlement of Employees' Provident Fund Accounts have been received by Government ;

(b) if so, the reasons for these delays ; and

(c) the steps taken to meet the requests of the Provident Fund account holders for realisation of their Provident Fund accounts ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR, EMPLOYMENT AND REHABILITATION (SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD) : (a) The administration of the Employees' Provident Fund is the concern of the Central Board of Trustees, an autonomous organisation set up under the Employees' Provident Funds Act, 1952 and is not the concern of the Government of India. The information is not available with the Government of India. The Provident Fund Authorities have reported that during the years 1966-67, 1967-68 and 1968-69, over 90% of the claims were settled within one month but complaints regarding

delay in settlement of claims are received in some cases.

(b) According to the report of the Provident Fund Authorities, the following are the main reasons for the delay in the settlement of claims :—

- (i) non-submission of returns by the establishments ;
- (ii) non-payment of provident fund dues by the establishments ;
- (iii) submission of incomplete/incorrect claim forms ;
- (iv) dispute over the title of the claimant ;
- (v) non-submission of Estate Duty Clearance Certificate.

(c) Prosecutions and recovery proceedings are resorted to against the defaulting establishments for non-submission of returns and non-deposit of provident fund dues. In certain cases, action is also initiated under sections 406/409 of the Indian Penal Code.

Deficit in Foodgrains

403 SHRI YAJNA DATT SHARMA :
Will the Minister of FOOD & AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the present deficit in foodgrains faced by the country and the way the same is being met ;

(b) whether the Punjab Government have informed the Central Government that the State is prepared to meet the entire deficit faced by the country in case the Centre gives 200 MW electricity to Punjab ; and

(c) if so, whether the Central Government have assessed the claim of the Punjab Government in the matter and the steps taken by the Central Government to help the State to meet the country's need ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) : (a) The requirements of food.

grains depend on a number of factors e.g. population, extent of material prosperity of the people, their food habits, extent of urbanisation and the availability of subsidiary and substitute foods. In a developing economy like India's, most of these factors are constantly changing. In view of this and in the absence of a scientific survey of consumption of foodgrains, it is not possible to estimate the requirements and, therefore, the deficit at any point of time. To meet the requirements of public distribution and of buffer stocks, foodgrains are being imported at present after taking into account Government procurement within the country.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Programme to Raise Production

*404. SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any programmes have been formulated throughout the country to remedy major defects in the rural economy and to help the farmers raise production ;

(b) whether the Intensive Agriculture District Programme known as the 'package programme' falls under the above category ;

(c) if so, the origin, objectives and achievements made so far ; and

(d) the States and the Districts in which the programme already exists ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) : (a) Yes, Sir. The new strategy for agricultural development, which is being followed since 1966-67 throughout the country, aims at helping the farmer to increase the per hectare yields through application of science and technology and thereby seeks to improve the rural economy. The key elements of the new strategy are :

1. Large-scale adoption of the high-yielding varieties of paddy and wheat and hybrids of maize, jowar and bajra to replace the traditional

varieties. These new varieties are capable of giving much higher yields per unit of land under proper farm management practices and technology than the traditional varieties.

2. The availability of short-duration high-yielding varieties has opened up vast opportunities of raising more than one crop from lands which were hitherto single cropped. This led to the introduction of a Multiple Cropping Programme in the year 1967-68. The coverage of this programme is increasing rapidly from year to year.
3. Short-duration varieties of pulses and other crops have been introduced to fit in with the cropping patterns under different agro-climatic conditions.
4. The high-yielding varieties are fertilizer-responsive and require higher doses of fertilization than the traditional varieties for giving optimum yields. Steps have been taken to improve the arrangements for supply of fertilizers to the cultivators to ensure adequate and timely provision of this input. These include increased credit as well as storage facilities.
5. Large-scale and integrated pest control measures have been taken up to save the crops from damage by pests and diseases.
6. Demonstrations are organised to show the farmers benefits of adoption of package of practices recommended for the cultivation of high-yielding varieties. The package of practices is prescribed on the basis of research results and field experience.
7. A large number of Farmers' Training Centres have been established as a support to the High-Yielding Varieties Programme. At these centres farmers are trained in the adoption of improved techno-