

crores was raided by certain political parties from the share croppers on the pretext of coming to the rescue of the cultivators; and

(b) if so, the details about the policy formulated and the steps undertaken by Government to ensure peaceful harvesting in West Bengal this year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHB SHINDE) : (a) The information is being ascertained from the State Government.

(b) Necessary steps are being taken to ensure peaceful harvesting this year. As a matter of policy, a person who actually cultivated the land and grew crops on it will be permitted to harvest the crop. Whenever reports of any dispute with regard to any person or group of persons forcibly taking away crop from the cultivators or about actual possession of land and on facts as to who had actually cultivated the land and grown crops on it are received, local inquiry would be held immediately by the Revenue Officer to ascertain the facts and if conciliatory efforts fail such action as may be considered necessary will be taken.

Rural works programme in Orissa

*495. SHRI SRADHAKAR SUPAKAR: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria for the selections of Districts for the rural works programme and the mode of selection; and

(b) the names of the Districts in Orissa which have been selected for the rural works programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHB SHINDE) : (a) For implementation of Rural Works Programme, chronically drought affected districts have been identified on the basis of objective criteria such

as incidence of rainfall, frequency and extent of drought, percentage of irrigated area and other relevant factors Districts have been selected and the actual project areas determined on the basis of information furnished by the State Governments.

(b) In Orissa, two Districts, namely, Kalahandi and Boudh Phulbani have been selected for the Programme.

Central wage Board for Agricultural Labour

*496. SHRI HIMATSINGKA : Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any Central Wage Board for agricultural labour is proposed to be set up to lay down a wage structure for these workers;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) if the answer to (a) above be in the affirmative, the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI D. SANJIVAYYA) : No, Sir.

(b) It is considered that the question of the fixation of wages in agriculture can be dealt more appropriately under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 which already covers employment in agriculture.

(c) Does not arise.

Lowering postage and parcels for foreign countries

*497. SHRIMATI ILA PALCHOU DHURI : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Posts and Telegraphs Department has lowered postage rates for parcels to several countries of the world;

(b) if so, the reasons for lowering the rates;

(c) the names of the countries; and