

members outside that they do not get our transmissions from India on the external services. Will you take care of that? Wherever I have gone, they told me that they cannot hear it...

SHRI A.K. PANJA: We have the External Service transmission...

MR. SPEAKER: That should be powerful enough.

SHRI A.K. PANJA: I will certainly look into that, if places and mentioned.....

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: This is just for your information.

(Interruptions)

[*Translation*]

Alternative Crop to Wheat

*881. SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA:
SHRI TEJA SINGH DARDI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an alternative crop to wheat has been suggested to the farmers in view of the plentiful production of wheat and the farmers not getting remunerative price for it;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by Government in this direction keeping in view the interests of the farmers?

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (DR. G.S. DHILLON): (a) Diversification of area from wheat to alternate crops is being advocated in areas where wheat sowing is

being done with limited irrigation facilities, besides delayed sowing conditions and rainfed conditions where wheat cultivation is uneconomical.

(b) Alternate crops like Rabi oilseeds and pulses are being advised.

(c) Question does not arise.

(d) Farmers are being encouraged to take up oilseeds crops like Mustard. Toria-Gobhi, Sarson, Safflower and Sunflower through supply of inputs, laying out of field trials, and procurement of the produce through support price mechanism.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA: Sir, in the report by Dr. K.S. Labhana, Additional Commissioner (Oilseeds) in the Union Ministry of Agriculture, he said that the profitability of Gobhi, Sarson in fields vacated by paddy, toria and sugarcane is higher than that of wheat in certain areas of Punjab and Haryana. The Minister in his reply has said: "besides delayed sowing conditions and rainfed conditions where wheat cultivation is uneconomical".. wheat cultivation is uneconomical. This is the point which he has conceded. My point is that in Punjab and Haryana, the wheat cultivation is becoming uneconomical because the land has been fully exhausted and moreover, the wheat lying in godowns for the last four years has not been lifted by FCI and other agencies. Will the hon. Minister assure us that he is taking a special programme to convince the farmers of Punjab and Haryana for diversification and going in for alternative crops to wheat? Are you taking certain special programmes or having certain earmarked areas in Punjab and Haryana for this purpose?

DR. G.S. DHILLON: The hon. Member has just said that wheat growing in Punjab is becoming uneconomic. I do not agree with this. But I agree with him that the area and production are much more than the required, sometimes. So, we appointed a Study Team on it and Dr. Johl, Vice-Chancellor of the Ludhiana University

made a report on it. Now, he is the Chairman of the Agricultural Cost and Prices Commission. He has advised that wheat require atleast 10 irrigations whereas the other crops.....

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA: That is the point I said....

DR. G.S. DHILLON: I am going to answer. Why are you interrupting?.. The oilseeds require less number of them. Irrigation in Punjab is 85 per cent, much more than any other State. Dr. Johl says that we could divert a part of the area to production of other crops and he has suggested horticulture, he has suggested dairying, and he has suggested more diversion to fodder. I think, what he has suggested is, to a large extent, correct.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA: My point is this. How can his answer to the question be right when the Minister's approach is that wheat-growing in Punjab and Haryana has not become uneconomical, when he is not sure, when he has not been fully informed by his officers that wheat-growing in Punjab and Haryana has become uneconomical. The very fact, when he says that wheat needs 10 irrigation periods and other crops need only two or three, is itself a proof that wheat-growing has become uneconomical. So, I join issue with him. The Minister should satisfy the House how he is convinced that wheat-growing in Punjab and Haryana is not uneconomical. I can say with all the statistics that wheat-growing in Punjab and Haryana is uneconomical. People are fed up with wheat-growing; they are not getting remunerative prices. I join issue on this point.

DR. G.S. DHILLON: I am very much amused over the analysis put up by him. Besides being a Minister of this Department, I am a farmer myself.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA: I am also a farmer.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Another farmer is sitting there.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA: He is the leader.

DR. G.S. DHILLON: As far as our studies go, wheat is not uneconomical. But the Johl Committee which was appointed by the Government of Punjab, your Government there, have recommended that, looking to the future needs, we could have some alternative pattern of cropping, and the pattern he has recommended, I have just now mentioned to you.

[Translation]

SHRI YASHPAL SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think, wheat production is becoming uneconomical not only in Punjab and Haryana but also in other parts of the country and in such circumstances, it is but natural for the farmers to go in for some alternate crop but till now they are incapable of taking up some other cropping pattern. I want to know from the hon. Minister whether in view of the requirements of the country as a whole, the fluctuating market and the imbalanced production, he will present some such balanced agricultural production programme to see that such conditions are not created, market prices are stabilised, production becomes stable and the question of alternative crop pattern does not arise? Will the hon. Minister consider formulating any such programme?

[English]

DR. G.S. DHILLON: I replied to the first question because the background was given only about Punjab. But the reply to the question about Punjab may not be applicable to many other areas because there the irrigation is very scanty, limited. I quite agree that where irrigation is low, wheat production may not be very economical there. Where there are only three or four irrigations available instead of eight or ten required in the case of wheat, we have suggested that alternative crop pattern should be followed like oilseeds and all that. We have set up some cropping pattern. If the Speaker allows me two minutes

more, I can read out. These are alternatives: One, Autumn Potato and Mustard; (2) Autumn cane & Mustard/Toria; (3) Turia & Gobi Sarson and Summer Moong; (4) Toria and Sunflower/Sugarcane; (5) Toria Spring Groundnut; (6) Toria followed by Water Melon and others. So, these are different agro-climatic conditions and we have suggested that by rotation.

DR. CHINTA MOHAN: Sir we are importing so much of edible oils in our country and also as Mr. Ramoowalia has said that the wheat production in Punjab is more uneconomic. At this juncture, the Minister can give the House an assurance that oilseeds production will be encouraged in the States of Punjab, Haryana and other parts of Andhra Pradesh.

DR. G.S. DHILLON: Sir I never agreed with Mr. Ramoowalia that it is uneconomic. But, I have no objection if Mr. Ramoowalia advises his Government to take over to oilseeds and other cropping pattern. So, is the case in Haryana. Both are highly wheat intensive areas. But the irrigation is so much enough that instead of coming down we can have other pattern more preferably in other States where the irrigation level is low.

(Interruptions)

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Mr Ramoowalia thinks that his Government has become uneconomic.

MR. SPEAKER: Ramoowaliaji should have drawn attention to this fact that over-saturation by water both these crops paddy as well as wheat are giving a new problem of water-logging. I remember that in my area it was 100 feet when I left college in 1945. Now, water-level has come to only 5 feet. Even by diversification, this salinity will come. So, you have to take care of that problem of drainage and everything.

DR. G.S. DHILLON: That is the problem which I am facing. You did not face from that perspective.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA: We are not satisfied with the reply.

DR. CHINTA MOHAN: Sir, let us have a debate.

MR. SPEAKER: We can have it because this salinity will cause problem. We shall have some debate.

DR. G.S. DHILLON: Mr. Speaker, he says, I have not given satisfactory reply. When he was there that was not the problem. When I visited that constituency it was very much there. This is the reply.

MR. SPEAKER: I am voicing the grievance of his constituency. *(Interruptions)* That is part and parcel of the country. When the water level comes up it will destroy even the fruit trees. They do not require wet field.

[Translation]

Provision of Material Components for Famine Relief Programme

*882. SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government pay more emphasis on the permanent construction works under the famine relief programme;

(b) whether Government do not provide any material components required for the permanent construction works;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether Government propose to modify the policy and provide help to backward areas in the form of material components; and

(e) if so, the time and the manner in which it is proposed to be provided for?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE