

would like to inform the hon. Member and the House about the situation in Haldia. The Haldia plant was envisaged in 1971. It was mechanically complete in 1979, i.e. 3 1/2 years after the due date of completion. In 1979, West Bengal Government did not give power as they had promised. So, it took another three years for the Government to put a captive power plant. After that, the commissioning was started, trial runs were done, and there was some failure in the machinery because, as Mamata was saying, justice delayed is justice denied. When a plant is ready for operation and it is not operated, and is operated after three years, there are bound to be breakdowns, because a sort of complacency comes in the workers there.

Not only that. The labour situation there is very militant. I am not saying that they are going on strike; I am not saying that they are doing anything like that. But I would like to cite a specific instance of what happened there. The operators left the plant, left the work spot. Because of that, an oxygen gas holder failed, and an oxygen compressor was burnt. This is the situation. There have been various criticisms, that technology is not good, and the machinery is not good. I would like to tell the House that the machinery is all right, and the technology is all right. It may not be the latest technology; but the situation there is so because the maintenance is not good, and the repairs are not done in time; and the proper work culture is not there.

SHRI SATYAGOPAL MISRA : About the situation at Haldia, what the hon. Minister has stated, is not correct. Two oxygen compressors got fired, but not because of the labour problems. Some experts were engaged to find out the causes, but no cause was found out. Now he is shifting the whole blame on the workers. Here, I may remind you that in H.F.C. I (Haldia), the union is led by you.

My question is that these two consultants have specifically recommended that

Rs. 502 crores will be necessary for the re-opening of this plant, and for the first year, viz. 1989-90., Rs 138.48 crores will be necessary. If you do not take the investment decision right now, how will work be started from 1st April 1989? Because in between, some formalities are there; some tenders will have to be floated and some other technicalities are there? Therefore, my point is that investment decisions should be taken right now, without any further delay. You have appointed these consultants. They have given you the report. Now you are sleeping. But this is not the time for sleeping. You should have to take an investment decision right now. What are you doing about that? I want a specific answer.

SHRI PRABHU: Just because foreign consultants have given an end-to-end survey report, it does not mean that Government has automatically to take an investment decision. Like I said, Sir, it is a very difficult economic decision to take, because the retention price that we have to pay for urea or other products is nearly 3 to 4 times that we pay for modern, gas-based plants. But I am not saying that we are not going to re-vamp that plant. I am just saying that we are going to take a comprehensive decision; give us some more time, because we have to look into all the aspects and then take a decision, because we cannot ask the people of this country to subsidize the plant at Haldia.

Setting up Expert Group for Seed Production and Distribution

*106. SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up an expert group to go into various aspects of seed production and distribution in the country;

(b) if so, the composition of the group; and

(c) the time by which the group is likely to submit its report to Government?

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL

YADAV) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A copy of the Commission of the Expert Group on Seed is given in the statement.

(c) The Expert Group on Seed is expected to Submit its report by June, 1989.

STATEMENT

COMPOSITION OF THE EXPERT GROUP ON SEED

- | | | |
|--|-------|----------|
| 1. Shri K. Ramamurthy,
3, Forest Park,
Bhubaneswar (Orissa) | | Chairman |
| 2. Dr. M.V. Rao
Special Director General
Indian Council of Agricultural
Research , Krishi Bhavan,
New Delhi. | | Member |
| 3. Dr. S. S. Khanna,
Adviser (Agriculture)
Planning Commission,
Yojna Bhavan, New Delhi. | | Member |
| 4. Smt. Usha Vohra, Addl. Secy.
Deptt. of Agriculture and
Cooperation (Ministry of Agriculture)
New Delhi. | | Member |
| 5. Shri T.C. A. Srinivasaramanujan
Financial Adviser,
Deptt. of Agriculture and
Cooperation (Ministry of Agriculture)
New Delhi. | | Member |
| 6. Shri K. Rajan,
Secretary (Agriculture),
Government of Maharashtra, Bombay. | | Member |
| 7. Shri J.K. Arora, Joint Secy.,
Govt. of India, Department of
Agriculture & Cooperation
Ministry of Agriculture, New Delhi. | | Member |

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|-----|---|-------|--------------|
| 8. | Dr. T.V. Sampath,
Agriculture Commissioner,
Deptt. of Agri. & Coopn.
Ministry of Agriculture, New Delhi. | | Member |
| 9. | Dr. R.S. Paroda,
Dy. Director General (CS)
ICAR, Krishi Bhavan, New Delhi. | | Member |
| 10. | Dr. D.S. Sidhu, Prof. Marketing.
Deptt. of Agriculture,
Economics, Punjab Agriculture
University, Ludhiana (Punjab) | | Member |
| 11. | Prof. Sudhin K Kukhopathyaya
Prof. of Economics & Director,
Centre for Human Resources
Development, Deptt. of Economics,
University of Kalyani,
Kalyani-741 235 (West Bengal) | | Member |
| 12. | Managing Director,
National Seeds Corporation Ltd.
Beej Bhavan, Pusa Complex,
New Delhi 110002 | | Member |
| 13. | Dr. Y. Yogeswara Rao,
Managing Director,
Andhra Pradesh State Seed
Development Corporation Ltd.,
11-5-471/1 Red Hills,
Hyderabad - 500014 | | Member |
| 14. | Dr. G.S. Kalra,
Dy. General Manager (Technical),
Technical Service Department,
National Bank for Agriculture and
Rural Development Post Box No 6552,
Dr. Annie Besant Road, Worli,
Bombay 400018. | | Member |
| 15. | Shri G. Ranga Rao,
Joint Secretary,
Government of India,
Department of Agriculture & Cooperation,
Ministry of Agriculture,
New Delhi. | | Member Secy. |

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Hon.
Mr. Speaker, Sir, the unsatisfactory produc-
tion and distribution of seeds in our state is a

burning issue. Farmers were given spurious
seeds in the name of certified seeds. These
seeds did not germinate which adversely

affected the farmers. Besides this, the price of seeds is very high. Is the Study Group making any effort towards regulation of price of seeds? There is at least a ten-fold difference between the cost price and selling price of seeds, particularly in the case of cotton seeds.

SHRISHYAM LAL YADAV : This expert group was set up for seeds of five cereals namely wheat, rice, maize gram and 'arhar'. This group had to give suggestions regarding production and distribution of seeds. The terms of reference on which the group was to give suggestions include evaluation of adequacy and scope of expansion of research in seeds, identification of schemes for production of certified seeds, an effective distribution system through the National Seed Corporation and State Seed Corporations, striking a balance between production and distribution and methods to fix appropriate prices for quality seeds. An interim report was submitted last June wherein some decisions are pending. The final report is expected to be submitted by next June. Therefore no final decision has been taken on the interim report.

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : My question related to the high sale price of seeds. The Government buys it at Rs 5/- a kilo and sells it at Rs 50/- a kilo. Why did the Government not ask the study group to go into the propriety of these high prices? The hon. Minister is himself a progressive farmer. The expert group is taking a long time. The 15 Member group consists of doctors and bureaucrats only with no representative of farmers. Only a farmer can best explain the deficiencies in seeds and reasons for its failure to germinate. The report will be submitted in 1989. At least five representatives of the farmers should be inducted into the expert panel.

MR. SPEAKER : Why are you making demand in terms of at least ? You should ask for in terms of maximum.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BHAJAN LAL) : The seeds produced

by the National Seed Corporation is given to farmers on a no profit no loss basis. And overall figures show that the National Seed Corporation always runs into losses, not profits. The objective of producing seeds by this Corporation is to provide good quality seeds to farmers. As regards his second point that the group did not have any representatives of farmers, the members of this group are scientists and experts closely linked with the farming community. The Chairman is Shri K. Ramamurthy, retired Chief Secretary of Orissa. I mean to say that ... (*Interruptions*) ... Please listen to me ... (*Interruptions*) ... Please listen to me for one minute... (*Interruptions*) Mr. Speaker, Sir, no I.A.S. officer or politician ever falls from the sky. They were also perhaps born in the family of a farmer. If a person is born in the family of a farmer, he too can be said to belong to the class of farmers. Moreover, person having the qualification of B.Sc (Agriculture) is virtually a farmer. A number of our officials and politicians belong to farmer's family. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to inform the House that majority of members of this expert group are agricultural scientists... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Minister, please listen to me also. As far as I understand, the hon. Member means to say that a person who does not do farming work himself will not have as much knowledge of farming as a farmer has. Please keep this in mind. What you are saying is also correct but it would be better if a balance can be struck between the two.

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : I agree with you that a person not having first hand experience of agriculture would not have adequate knowledge of that subject. At the same time I cannot agree that I.A.S. officers posted as Directors or Secretaries of Agriculture and Vice-Chancellor of any University cannot gain adequate knowledge by the time they retire. In fact, they would have more knowledge than a fresh B.Sc. (Agriculture) graduate. They are certainly competent to give good advice as they have gained plenty of knowledge and experience by that age. The

expert group will see how the activities of the National Seed Corporation and other seed producers can be co-ordinated. They will find out the quality of seeds most suitable to the needs of the country and how their production can be increased. All this and more will be part of their report to be submitted next June.

[English]

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : One of the main deficiencies for increase in agricultural production in our country is inadequate supply of high quality seeds. While in China Farmers are given greater part of the seed requirement from the foundation seed rather than certified seed, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what steps Government is taking to enhance or increase many more times the production of foundation seeds to be available to the farmers. I would also categorically like to know from the Government that in the developed countries, those Governments or private institutions are investing so much money on research and development on biotechnology which may bring several changes in the country. Unless we also spend considerable amount in that direction, we may be put to serious loss and our farmers may have to face a dangerous situation. Therefore, I would like to know : what steps Government is taking to meet that situation by spending considerable amount on research and development on biotechnology?

SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV: Government is taking all steps to increase the production of foundation seeds and supply it to the farmers. Our technical institutions, universities all are involved in this. I do not think there is any shortage of funds for this purpose. private companies can also do it. There is no bar on them. That is why , new seeds policy has been announced and there is some provision for private companies to import requisite quantity of seeds on certain conditions. This Committee is involved in making the suggestion. Foundation seed cannot be supplied to all the farmers. It can

only be supplied to progressive farmers who can multiply it and then give it to other general farmers. So the quantity of foundation seed will always be limited. It can later on be developed and multiplied. Only then we can have it on a large scale. The National Seeds Corporation, State Seeds Corporations and State Farms Corporations are also producing seeds and then supplying these to farmers.

PROF. N.G. RANGA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I know whether it is already too late for the Government to find two suitable farmers from anywhere in India and appoint them as additional members of this Committee in order to help the Government as well as the farmers, in view of the fact that the price of seeds is too high? Take for instance groundnut. There is need to reduce its price.

SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV : Sir, in view of the sentiments expressed by the hon. Member, the Government will consider this suggestion.

British Scholarships for Indian Students

*107. SHRI P.M. SAYEED : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the existing number of scholarships for Indian Students in the United Kingdom including the amount and subjects for which these are available;

(b) whether the number of these scholarships is being increased by the British Government; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI L.P.SHAHI) : (a) The number of scholarships offered by the British Government to Indian students is unspecified. Every year they offer scholarships ranging between 40