

SRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : Since you have disallowed clubbing of my questions, I shall be on *dal*.

MR. SPEAKER : But you should not go to masala and pyaj.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : Now I would like to know whether the Minister will assure that pulses will be supplied through public distribution system and if so from when ?

SHRI BUTA SINGH : At present there is no such scheme with the Government of India to put pulses in the public distribution system but we are examining it.

SHRI PRITHVIRAJ D. CHAVAN : Sir, Last year when there was a tremendous shortage of sugar the Government took a decision to import sugar on OGL at zero duty. Now, this year since there is shortage in respect of pulses, the Government has put it on OGL and reduced the import duty from 10 per cent to 5 per cent. I would like to know from the Government why they have kept the import duty at 5 per cent. Why do you not import pulses also at zero per cent duty ? Will the Minister take this up in the next meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Prices because the common man is agitated?

SHRI BUTA SINGH : Sir, one way of knowing how much quantity of pulses have really arrived at the ports is through the import duty. Otherwise 5 per cent is just nominal.

Productivity of Forests

*24. SHRI GOPINATH GAJAPATHI : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have a proposal/specific plan to raise the productivity of forests in the country ;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) Whether the facilities to establish seed storage and seed technology laboratories are being extended so as to see that the quality seeds that are collected can be appropriately utilised for raising good planting stock; and

(d) if so, the details regarding the Testing Rules framed for all the important species in order to make available the certified seeds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) :

(a) Yes, sir.

(b) The increase in the productivity of forests has been planned by massive afforestation and enrichment plantation of open and degraded forests under various schemes, including Externally Aided Projects, through use of improved planting stock. Adequate protection of natural forests with proper technical upgradation by silvicultural treatment is being done to increase production. National

Forestry Action Plan (NFAP) currently under preparation has also identified the 'Increase in productivity of Forests' as a high priority area.

(c) Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) is carrying out research in development of technology for quality seeds and is creating seed processing facilities including, the establishment of seed banks, through eight centres located in various parts of the country. The Ministry of Environment and Forests is also providing 100% central assistance under a Centrally Sponsored Scheme to the State Governments for seed development activities. Under this scheme, the Central Government has provided Rs. 1030 lakh to State Governments during the period from 1988-89 to 1994-95.

(d) ICFRE has so far developed the testing rules for 59 important forest tree species.

SHRI GOPINATH GAJAPATHI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in this era of environment consciousness, the efforts made by the Government of India for the promotion of vital subject of forestry is indeed commendable. Now the Central Governments has provided Rs. 1030 lakh to the State Governments from the years 1988 to 1995. May I know from the Hon. Union Minister the Statewise allocation out of this Rs. 1030 lakh under the Centrally sponsored scheme; and to what extent the State Government have been able to succeed in the development of seeds quality like in setting up of Gene Banks and Seed Technology Laboratories ?

SHRI KAMAL NATH : Sir, if the Hon. Member wants the Statewise distribution of the Rs 1030 lakh, which has been allotted in these years, there is a chart, which I will be happy to send to the Member. But for any specific State and for any specific year which Hon. Members desires to know, I will be able to give it to him straightaway. Sir, under the seed development programme which we have, we have achieved considerable success. That is why, our seed productivity has gone up and the States were, under this programme, required to do various practices which they have reasonably and successfully done.

SHRI GOPI NATH GAJAPATHI : Mr. Speaker, Sir I would also like to know from our dynamic Union Minister, as to which are the different States where the National Forestry Action Plan is being implemented; and whether it would be introduced in Orissa State and also the year by which the plan would be implemented in the entire country as well.

SRI KAMAL NATH : Sir, for the first time , we launched the preparation of the National Forestry Action Programme. The National Forestry Action Programme is a perspective document and also includes the action plan giving higher priority to increase the productivity of the areas under forests and this priority is being given next only to preservation of existing forest resources. This National Forestry Action Programme is in the process of completion of its final stages

and Orissa being one of the important States, as far as their forestry is concerned, it obviously forms part of it.

[Translation]

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI : Just now, Hon. Prime Minister has said that from the year 1989-90 to 1995-96, Rs. 1030 lakhs were allocated to the State Governments, I would like to know as to whether you have carried out a Survey about the increase in the percentages of forests and in the state concerned ? Part 'b' of my question is as to whether Hon. Minister knows that the desert of Rajasthan is expanding towards Delhi? The Central Government does not provide funds to the State Governments. Hon. Minister, the data you have given proves that the desert is expanding, whether you have decided to provide all necessary facilities in order to check its expansion ? If so, please give details.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Even if it does not arise out of this question, you will reply. You must ; and you are in a position to.

[Translation]

SHRI KAMAL NATH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, as far as the question raised by the member is concerned that as to whether the Schemes which have been implemented proved successful? We do remote sensing through satellite imagery and we have prepared the State of the forest report only last year. We interpret district's photo every year on the basis of satellite imagery. Our forests have increased for the first time.

As far as the expansion of Rajasthan's desert is concerned, this is indeed right. So there is a 0.30 C.F. Scheme for Aravalli-region, this has been implemented. We are achieving success here and several members of our consultative Committee had gone there. They have given me all the informations after having verifying those. They were also satisfied that we would achieve success through the Scheme for Aravalli Ranges.

[English]

SHRI ASHOK ANANDRAO DESHMUKH : I Would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether the Government have identified any forests specifically for gene pool conservation for quality seed production. If they have, which are these products and whether additional funds will be placed with the States for this specific purpose ?

SHRI KAMAL NATH : The Indian Council of Forest Research and Education with its eight institutes is identified to take up these extension programmes in various places, whether it is Ranchi — we have one at Ranchi, we have one at Shimla, we have one at Coimbatore, we have one at Jorhat, we have one at Jodhpur, we have one at Jabalpur

and we have one at Allahabad — or anywhere. They have identified specific areas which are suitable not only for particular tree species but also for genetic improvement. Undoubtedly tree productivity in our country is very low. It is 0.7 cubic metre per hectare against the international average of 2.1 cubic metres per hectare per year. So, this is a matter for concern and it is receiving our attention.

[English]

Agricultural Growth Rate

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*25. SHRI JAGMEET SINGH BRAR :
SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) in their Report has expressed concern about the falling of India's Agriculture farm growth;

(b) if so, the main recommendations therein in regard to the supply and demand of food in the next century; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) has observed that India's agricultural growth has been sufficient in recent decades. However, the main observations made in the Report include more emphasis on diversification in agriculture, need to increase capital investment in agriculture higher outlays for agricultural research and extension, priority for completion of the ongoing irrigation projects, faster growth in institutional credit, and involving the NGO's and private sector in building rural infrastructure, etc.

(c) The findings of the study are of general nature and the Government is already Seized of the issues raised therein.

SHRI JAGMEET SINGH BRAR : Hon. Speaker, Sir, I am really surprised and stunned to read the reply of the Hon. Minister, In Part (a) he has stated that " The International Food Policy Research Institute has observed that India's agricultural growth has been sufficient in recent decades." I have got the report of the IFPRI and I would like to quote only two lines from the first paragraph:

" The International Food Policy Research Institute has said that rapid agricultural growth that India has experienced during the Green Revolution is waning and is becoming a cause for concern."

Now, in answer to part A of my question has said, 'No' I would also like to quote the report which states:-