

Investment and infrastructure facility for agriculture sector

†3413. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering upon to improve the infrastructure in rural areas to increase investment in the agriculture sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether "Indo-American Knowledge Initiative on Agricultural Research and Education" has devised a new framework for cooperation based on agricultural research and development in order to facilitate entry of multi-national companies into the villages; and

(d) if so, the objectives and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Schemes being implemented to improve the infrastructure in rural areas to increase investment in the agriculture sector include *inter-alia* Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, Micro Irrigation, National Horticulture Mission, Technology Mission on Horticulture for North-Eastern States, Sikkim, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, Macro Management of Agriculture, Development / Strengthening of Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure, Grading and Standardization; Grameen Bhandaran Yojana and Development and Strengthening of Infrastructure Facilities for Production and Distribution of Quality Seeds.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Question does not arise.

Infrastructure for dairy co-operatives

3414. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government is providing funds to strengthen the infrastructure of dairy co-operatives;

(b) if so, the details of the agencies through which funding is done;

(c) whether the existing guidelines stipulates the assistance only to the dairy co-operatives affiliated to the regional union;

(d) if so, whether Government considers change in the present guidelines to include the traditional milk societies which are not affiliated to union; and

(e) the response of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir. The Central Government is implementing two Centrally Sponsored Schemes namely "Intensive Dairy Development Programme (IDDP)" and "Strengthening Infrastructure for Quality and Clean Milk Production" and one Central Sector Scheme namely "Assistance to Co-operatives" to strengthen the infrastructure of dairy cooperatives.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) to (e) As per the existing guidelines, the funds under the scheme IDDP are directly released to the State Dairy Federation/District Milk Union including Regional Milk Unions. Funds under the Scheme 'Strengthening Infrastructure for Quality and Clean Milk Production' are released through State Government' to District Milk Union/State Milk Federation/Regional Milk Union for project implementation.

Under the scheme "Assistance to Co-operatives", funds are released to District Milk Union/ State Co-operative Milk Federation through NDDDB, for rehabilitation of sick Co-operative Milk Unions, which also includes / Regional Milk Unions.

No proposal is presently, under consideration of Central Government to change the existing guideline of the schemes.

Essential drugs under price control

3415. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is considering to bring 354 essential drugs under price control;
- (b) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) The Supreme Court *vide* its interim order dated 10-3-2003 in SLP (c) No. 3668/2003 directed the Government, *inter-alia*, to "consider and formulate appropriate criteria for ensuring essential and life saving drugs not to fall out of price control and further directed to review drugs which are essential and life saving in nature till 2nd May, 2003". As per the directions of the Supreme Court, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare reviewed the National Essential Drugs List 1996 and brought out the National List of Essential Medicines 2003 (NLEM 2003).

Keeping in view the directions of the Supreme Court it has been proposed in the draft National Pharmaceuticals Policy-2006 that basket of drugs for price control would be the formulations of specified strength of essential medicines as contained in the NLEM 2003 (subject to certain exemptions) in addition to the 74 bulk drugs and formulations thereof which are at present under price control under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995 and the formulations based thereon.

This Policy was submitted before the Cabinet for its approval. The Cabinet considered the Policy in its meeting held on 11-1-2007. It was decided that the matter may, in the first instance, be considered by a Group of Ministers (GoM). GoM has since been constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri Sharad Pawar, Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, GoM has held three meetings so far on 10-4-2007, 12-9-2007 and 30-1-2008. GoM is yet to make its recommendations to the Cabinet.