

- (a) whether the agricultural growth rate declined from 9.9 per cent to only 0.5 per cent during the third quarter of 1999-2000;
- (b) if so, the reasons for such a steep decline;
- (c) what is the latest trend in this regard; and
- (d) the steps taken for reversing this negative growth in this sector?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. According to the estimates of quarterly Gross Domestic Product (GDP) released by the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) the growth of the sector, "Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing" in the quarter, October-December, 1999 has declined from 9.9% in the third quarter of 1998-99 to 0.5% in the third quarter of 1999-2000. The decline in the agricultural growth is on account of lower growth of agricultural production in Kharif 1999 due to aberrant weather conditions resulting in lower areas coverage and lower productivity of various crops like oilseeds, coarse cereals, pulses etc. According to the Advance Estimates of GDP released by CSO, the growth rate of the sector, "Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing" for the year 1999-2000 is 0.8%.

(d) According to CSO, the level of production of the sector, "Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing" is higher in the third quarter of 1999-2000 than in the corresponding quarter of the previous year, by 0.5%. However, for increasing production and productivity in Agriculture, the Government is implementing centrally sponsored Integrated Cereal Development Programmes in rice/wheat/ coarse cereals Based Cropping System Area, National Pulse Development Project, Oilseeds Production Programme and Technology Mission on Cotton etc. Under these programmes/projects, incentives are provided to farmers for use of high yielding varieties of seeds, application of Integrated Pest Management, propagation of scientific water management including micro irrigation and use of improved farm implements. Research is also being continuously undertaken to develop improved technologies so as to enhance the productivity and production of food grains in India. Field demonstrations on farmers' holding including training of farmers and farm labourers is being organised for effective transfer of technology.

Deficiency of Nutritious Substances in Soil

*473. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether due to intensive farming iron, zinc, sulphur and other such subtle nutritious substances are decreasing in soils of various regions;

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(b) if so, the details of the research done and the information available in this regard; and

(c) the effects apprehended on the health and production of various crops and plants due to the deficiency of these subtle nutritious substances?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SUNDER LAL PATWA): (a) Yes, Sir. The intensive farming with high inputs and high yielding varieties have resulted into deficiencies of micro and secondary nutrients particularly zinc, sulphur and iron in different regions of the country.

(b) The Institutes of ICAR and State Agricultural Universities have been undertaking basic strategic and applied research programmes to delineate micronutrient deficient areas, develop suitable diagnostic techniques, study responses of crops and to ameliorate micronutrient disorders in soils and plants. These studies are coordinated through All India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP) on Micronutrients in Soils and Plants of ICAR started in the year 1967.

Analysis of about 2,00,000 samples from 15 States and two Union Territories showed that zinc (Zn) deficiency is very widespread followed by sulphur (S) boron (B), iron (Fe), manganese (Mg), copper (Cu) and molybdenum (Mo) deficiencies.

(c) Since the secondary and micronutrients play very important role in the growth and development of plants, their deficiencies result into the loss of productivity, stability and sustainability of crop yields.

Horticulture in Arunachal Pradesh

*474. SHRI NABAM REBIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any scheme to encourage horticulture in Arunachal Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of amount allocated for the same during last three years?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA): (a) to (c) To promote the development of Horticulture in Arunachal Pradesh, Government of India is implementing following schemes:—