

cyclone affected areas of Orissa. The salient features of the programme include the following:—

- (1) Supply of composite seed packets containing germplasm of vegetables like spinach, radish, tomato, chilli, brinjal, cowpea, etc. so that nutritional requirements of cyclone affected areas are taken care of.
- (2) Supply of tractors and power tillers to overcome the shortage of bullock power.
- (3) Opening up of canals and their distributaries to ensure availability of fresh water for cultivation of rabi rice.
- (4) Promotion of rabi maize (baby corn/sweet corn) and ragi as alternate crops in the place of damaged rabi paddy.
- (5) Backyard rearing of poultry and goat on a priority basis to overcome the losses suffered by farmers.
- (6) Promotion of brackish water pisciculture in the wake of ponds and tanks ingressed with sea water.

Loss of Land due to Tidal Waves

2312. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the total hectares of land that lost fertility due to tidal wave and sea water in Orissa;
- (b) whether any step is proposed to be taken by Government to desilt the coastal land and to develop the same as cultivable land; and
- (c) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) About 47,000 hectares of land- in the coastal districts were inundated by the tidal wave in the recent Super Cyclone during Oct., 1999. The ingressed sea water has been pushed back by flood of sweet water that occurred within 24 hours. The ingressed salts might have been washed out by rains in most of the high lands. But in some low lying pockets, the ingressed sea water got locked up and remained standing in the rice field, being diluted to some extent by

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RAJYA SABHA

rain water. As per preliminary reports, salinity was below injury level.

{b) and (c) No such serious problem has occurred. But the saline affected soils will be managed with amendments like paper mill sludge/press mud from Sugar mills and application of Gypsum. Farmers have been advised to adopt measures such as plantation of saline tolerant crops, planting of proper size seedlings in case of paddy and using polythene mulch in small basins for crops planted in basins.

Arid-Zone Fruits Production in Gujarat

2313. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Gujarat is an ideal State for the development of fruit production particularly of arid-zone fruits; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken to increase fruit production in Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government is providing assistance to the State Governments including Gujarat for taking up programmes for production of fruits under the Central Sector Scheme on Development of Tropical, Temperate and Arid Zone Fruits. During the VIII Plan and the first two years of the IX Plan (1997-98 and 1998-99) an amount of Rs. 190.15 lakhs was released to the Government of Gujarat under the Scheme for taking up activities like establishment of nurseries, establishment of Tissue Culture Units, Area Expansion, Rejuvenation of senile orchards and training of farmers. An outlay of Rs. 115.61 lakhs have been earmarked for Gujarat during 1999-2003 under the scheme.

Five Year Programme for Land Use

2314. DR. GOPALRAO VITHALRAO PATIL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Crop and Space Scientists have joined hand for a new Five Year Programme to improve India's agricultural land use;