

**AGRICULTURE (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN) :** (a) to (d) Government has initiated a process to formulate a new Food Processing Policy for the country. Preliminary work in this regard has already been completed. It is difficult to indicate the time frame within which the policy will be announced. Immediately after the draft Policy is finalised, wide ranging consultations would be required with the State Government and other inter related Departments of the Government of India and other Organizations. Broadly the Policy would cover issues relating to availability of raw material, backward linkages, processing facilities including post harvest infrastructure, packaging, food quality and safety, marketing of products domestic and export, awareness about processed foods and fiscal incentives. These issues are only illustrative and not exhaustive.

**Payment of balance amount for Drought Relief in Andhra Pradesh**

**2323. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY :** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central aid has been sought by the State Government of Andhra Pradesh for tackling serious drought situation in half of the State;

(b) if so, the assistance given so far; and

(c) the time by which the balance amount is likely to be provided by the Union Government?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO) :** (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government of Andhra Pradesh has submitted a memorandum seeking assistance of Rs. 720.36 crore from the National Fund for Calamity Relief (NFCR) in the wake of drought in the State. The entire Central share of Rs. 107.69 crore, out of the allocation of Rs. 143.59 crore to the State under Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) for 1999-2000, has already been released to the State.

(c) The National Calamity Relief Committee has decided to release an amount of Rs. 75.36 crore to Andhra Pradesh from the NFCR for drought relief measures. The funds will be released shortly.