

World Bank Assistance for Prawn Culture in Orissa

*236. SHRI JAGADISH JANI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Bank has provided financial assistance for prawn culture in some States;

(b) if so, whether Government have received any grant for taking up prawn cultivation in Orissa; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the region in that State where prawn cultivation has been taken up?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR):

(a) to (c) A Brackishwater Shrimp and Fish Culture Project was negotiated for assistance with the World Bank during 25—27. November, 1991. The Project agreement will be signed after the Bank's final approval is received. The Project with a duration of 7 years is scheduled to be implemented in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal from 1992-93 onwards.

The shrimp culture component of the Project envisages development of about 3,810 ha. brackishwater land in Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal, out of which about 870 ha. will be in Orissa. The total estimated investment cost for this sub-project in Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal is about Rs. 260.40 crore (US \$ 87.3 million).

The Project in Orissa will cover three sites in the two coastal districts —Balasore and Cuttack, for shrimp farming involving an outlay of about Rs. 5.67 crore.

Operation Blackboard Scheme

*237. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether 'Operation Blackboard' scheme introduced in 1986, is still continuing; and

(b) if so, the progress made in terms of targets set and achievements made in each State during the last three years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

Operation Blackboard Scheme

The Central Government had launched the Scheme of Operation Blackboard in 1987-88 with a view to providing all primary schools existing as on 30th September, 1986 with the minimum essential facilities comprising: (i) an additional teacher in single teacher schools; (ii) two reasonably large all weather rooms, with a deep verandeh, alongwith separate toilet facilities for boys and girls; (iii) essential teaching learning material including blackboards, maps, charts, small library, toys and games and some equipment for work experience. Central assistance is provided for Teacher's salary and Teaching Learning Equipment. The State Governments/UT Administrations are responsible for locating funds for construction of school buildings. The Scheme envisages coverage of primary schools in all the blocks/municipal areas in the country in a phased manner.

Initially, the target of the scheme was to cover 20 per cent blocks/municipal areas during 1987-88, 30 per cent in 1988-89 and remaining 50 per cent during 1989-90. However, due to constraint on resources phasing had to be lengthened. In the period 1987-88 to 1990-91, the scheme could be implemented in 69 per cent of blocks in the country comprising 64 per cent primary schools. It is pro-

posed to cover the remaining schools during the VIIIth Plan. The progress of implementation of Operation Blackboard is given in Annexures IV. (See Appendix CLXI, Annexure Nos. 40, 41, 42 and 43)

Recommendations regarding Agro-Economic Research

*238. SHRI RAM NARESH YADAV: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the recommendations of the Review Committee for improving the performance of Agro-Economic Research Centres and their units; and

(b) what steps Government have taken to implement these recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR):

(a) The main recommendations of the Review Committee pertaining to improving the performance of Agro-Economic Research Centres and Units at the Institute included (i) the AER Centres to be put on a permanent footing, (ii) the AER Centres be made an integral part of their respective Universities retaining their separate identity, (iii) Strengthening of AER Centres/Units as also AER Branch of the Directorate of Economics & Statistics, (iv) strengthening of analytical capability of the Centres by providing mini-computers, (v) undertaking studies covering fundamental problems of Indian agriculture and rural economic change including common studies of All-India relevance and inter-regional analysis and (vi) need for improvement of the timelines in the completion of studies and preparation of reports.

(b) The recommendations of the Review Committee were examined by Empowered Committee set up by the Ministry in March, 1984 and were by

and large accepted by the Government. As a follow-up of these recommendations, the AER Centres have been declared permanent institutions by the Ministry on 21-5-90. The recommendations relating to the integration of A.E.R. Centres/Units with the respective Universities/Institutes is being processed and that relating to the strengthening of the staff of the Centres/Units would be taken up after the finalisation of the Eighth Five Year Plan. In order to improve the analytical facilities for research, the Centres have been provided mini-computers as also photo copier machines recently. Periodic reviews have been arranged with the Centres to monitor the progress of the research studies assigned to them.

New Steel Plants in Goa

*239. SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have issued any license to any firm for the setting up new steel plant in Goa;

(b) if so, what is the name of the firm and by when this plant is likely to start production; and

(c) what would be its estimated capacity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b) Government issued a letter of intent in 1985 to M/s. M.G. Poy Raturcar (later changed to M/s. Mar-magoa Steel Ltd.) for setting up a composite mini steel plant at Curtorim, Sakete, Goa. As per information filed by the applicant, commercial production is expected to commence by the end of December, 1991.

(c) As per information filed by the applicant, the proposed annual capacity of the unit is as follows: