

Import of fertilizers, pesticides and insecticides

†2773. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the country is forced to import huge quantities of fertilizers and pesticides/insecticides; in view of the increasing competition and crops in the agricultural sector, and diminishing land-fertility;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that pesticides/insecticides are till now being used which are quite fatal for environment and the birds; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that in the absence of any planned action-plan, the farmers would have to depend mostly on foreign manures and pesticides/insecticides in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) In the case of fertilizers, the country has now achieved a high degree of self-sufficiency in Nitrogenous and Phosphatic fertilizers; however, there is a total dependence on import for Potassic fertilizers because of the absence of its commercial exploitable reserves in the country. During 2000-01, out of total consumption of 355.6 LMTs of all the chemical fertilizers (in product terms), only about 34 LMTs of fertilizers were imported, which is less than 10%. On the other hand, India is a net exporter of pesticides. Its exports have shown an impressive growth over the last 5 years and totalled Rs. 1083 crores in 2000-01 (April-February) as against the import of Rs. 194 crores during this period. Thus, the indigenous capacity of pesticides is adequate to meet the requirement of domestic demand.

(c) All bird species are affected by pesticides/insecticides. However, the species found in and around farmlands are affected more. Some instances have also been noticed regarding decline in soil health and productivity due to inadequate and imbalanced use of chemical fertilizers in certain parts of the country.

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(d) No Sir. The Government of India has initiated a programme of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) with regard to usage of chemical pesticides. IPM is an eco-friendly approach, which encompasses cultural, mechanical, biological and need based chemical control measures. As a result of implementation of IPM programme, there is considerable reduction in the consumption of pesticides from 61,357 MT (Technical Grade) during 1994-95 to 49,157 MT (Technical Grade) during 1998-99. Use of integrated nutrients through chemical fertilizers and organic sources like biofertilizers, compost/vermicompost is being encouraged so as to improve and maintain soil fertility and make cheaper source of plant nutrients available to the crops.

Animal testing of new drugs

2774. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of CHEMICAL AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ban on animal testing in the country is creating hurdles in research and development efforts of Indian pharma companies;

(b) if so, how the companies are supposed to test new medicines; and

(c) the action proposed to help the Indian firms which are compelled to plan animal testing from abroad, for R&D?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICAL AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE):

(a) to (c) Pharmaceutical companies are required to follow the rules and procedures prescribed for animal experimentation under Breeding of and Experiments on Animals (Control and Supervision) Rules, 1998.

Assistance to Pharma PSUs

2775. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of CHEMICAL AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the financial or other means that have been provided to PSUs in pharma industry, to face competition from the private sector, both Indian and MNCs, during the last five years;