

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI JAYANTILAL VIRCHAND-BHAI SHAH):

(a) and (b) Considering the dangers of health hazards and poisoning due to improper usage of pesticides and other accidental incidence, the Government are emphasising on safe and judicious use of chemical pesticides. The Government are also encouraging the adoption of biological control for pest control in agriculture. Similarly, the Government is also supporting the use of bio-fertilizers and organic manures for supplementing the use of chemical fertilizers.

The Government are proposing to undertake an expanded programme of Integrated Pest Management including biological control during the VIth Five Year Plan and is placing high emphasis on this programme.

(c) Based on the research investigations conducted, some of the important publications like,

(i) Problems and prospects of Botanical Pesticides in Integrated Pest Management; and

(ii) Biological control on identified crop pests have been published.

(d) At present, bio-control agents are being introduced and distributed by 11 Central Biological Control Stations set up by the Government of India in different parts of the country. Some smaller units have also been set up by a few State Governments. One private company is also selling these agents on commercial scale. However, the Government are proposing to expand these facilities in the Government sector and are also encouraging public and private sector companies to undertake their production and sale.

Impact of Diesel shortage on Rabi-showing and transportation of farm Produce

159. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether recent diesel shortage hit rabi showing and also transport

of farm produce as appeared in the 'Times of India', dated the 28th November, 1990; and

(b) what corrective steps are being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI JAYANTILAL VIRCHAND-BHAI SHAH): (a) and (b) Certain restrictions were imposed on supply of High Speed Diesel (HSD) through retail outlets throughout the country. An 8 per cent cut was applied on supplies of HSD to Retail Outlets w.e.f. 8th October, 1990 which was increased to 10 per cent from 1st November 1990. Since the restrictions on release of HSD to retail outlets coincided with the Kharif Harvesting season and rabi sowing season, there has been marginal adverse effect on farm operations in some of the States. Instructions were issued to State Governments and Oil Companies to give priority to agricultural operations in distribution of diesel at the retail level. In fact priority was given for diesel to farmers in most States. The 10 per cent cut on supplies of HSD to retail outlets was withdrawn w.e.f. November 26, 1990 which has provided substantial relief to the transport and agricultural sectors throughout the country.

Demand of fertilizers

160. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: "Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the fertilizer scenario in the country during 1991 is likely to be discouraging the foreign exchange earning; and

(b) if so, what are the alternate steps Government are taking to cope up with the demand of fertilisers in the agriculture sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE CSHRT