

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) No, Sir. The estimated production of rice in the country during the last three years has not fallen below the corresponding targets.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) In order to further increase the production of rice in the country, Government of India is implementing various programmes such as National Food Security Mission (NFSM), Macro Management of Agriculture (MMA), and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) etc. The minimum Support Price of paddy has also been raised substantially during 2008-09.

Rise in price of agricultural apparatus

†1520. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that during the last three-four-years the agricultural apparatus have become more expensive;

(b) if so, the names of the apparatus which have got expensive;

(c) whether it is also a fact that farmers are not able to derive their due profit due to agricultural apparatus getting expensive; and

(d) if so, the measures adopted by Government to bring down the prices of agricultural apparatus and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (c) Data on price rise of individual agricultural machinery and implements and the impact on farmers profit is not available, due to diversity of manufacturers as also the very wide variety of types and sizes of agricultural machinery and implements. The prices of agricultural machinery and implements are governed by market forces and vary from State to State and area to area within the States.

(d) The Government has taken measures such as waiving of Excise duty on all agricultural implements and subsidy to farmers for the purchase of different agricultural equipments under various Government schemes has been increased from the year 2007-08.

Implementation of Kuttanad package in Kerala

1521. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Kuttanad package in Kerala;

(b) the total amount sanctioned and the amount released so far;

(c) whether there is any delay in implementing the project;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action taken by Government to speed up the implementation?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) For development of Kuttanad Wetland Eco-system as a part of Rehabilitation Package for the farmers in suicide prone districts of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Maharashtra, the Government has granted 'in-principle' approval for providing financial support involving financial outlay of Rs. 1,840.75 crore for implementing various programme/interventions suggested by M.S.Swaminathan Research Foundation, The approved programmes/interventions are to be implemented by the concerned Ministries/Departments within their existing schemes and funding pattern for which the Government of Kerala will after identifying the activities to be undertaken, submit appropriate proposals after formulation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) to the concerned Ministries/Departments of the Government of India in accordance with the approved guidelines/procedures for such schemes for release of necessary funds. The Government has also approved that the programmes/interventions involving financial outlay upto Rs.50 lakhs will be implemented by the State Government of Kerala from their own funds under their schemes.

(b) Ministry of Environment & Forests has sanctioned one project relating to measures for augmenting biodiversity in the backwaters involving an amount of Rs.37.85 lakhs of which Rs.15.75 lakh has been released during 2008-09. Ministry of Water Resources has approved a research study by IIT, Chennai involving amount of Rs.35 lakh for studying the "Modernization of Thanneermukkom Bund and for improving the efficiency of Thottappally Spillway" in June, 2009.

(c) to (e) Projects submitted by the Government of Kerala required some modification/rectification and the State Government of Kerala has already been advised to effectively coordinate and interact with the concerned Ministries/Departments of Government of India for sorting out the issues coming in way of sanction of projects.

Setting up of agricultural laboratory in Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Chhindwara

†1522. MISS ANUSUIYA UIKEY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Rs.25 crores have been sanctioned for the setting up of an agricultural laboratory in the Krishi Vigyan Kendra at Chandangaon in Chhindwara district;

(b) if so, the details thereof, and the details of the target set to complete it;

(c) the details of the facilities to be provided in it; and

(d) whether farmers will be able to have testing facility in this laboratory free of cost or they will have to pay fees for it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) The Indian Council of Agriculture Research has not sanctioned Rs.25 crores for letting up of an agricultural laboratory in the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) at Chandangaon in Chhindwara district. However, the Council had earlier in 2005 created soil and water testing facility in the KVK. An amount of Rs.11.80 lakh was released for the purpose.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.