

(b) There is a huge gap between demand and supply of Polymer materials in the domestic market and it is envisaged that the total product will be consumed by domestic polymer processors.

(c) Central Institute of Plastics Engineering and Technology (CIPET), Guwahati and Imphal are conducting various training programmes for Entrepreneurship Development and Skill Upgradation Programmes for the direct and indirect employment avenues for the upcoming Assam Gas Cracker Project. The training programmes are sponsored by different Government organizations like Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL), Brahmaputra Cracker and Polymer Limited (BCPL), Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DONER), Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, Financial Institutions like Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), and North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Limited (NEDFI).

(d) Written Test for 60 Graduate Engineering Trainees (GETs)/Executives Trainee (ETs) and 20 experienced Executives have been conducted. Further manpower to be recruited in future will be based on the specific requirements for Construction phase, Pre-Commissioning, Commissioning and Operation and Maintenance phases.

Collaboration with US in agriculture

*494. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

SHRI N.K. SINGH:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has recently entered into a collaboration with the United States in the field of agriculture;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether US has agreed to provide help in agricultural research work to improve productivity; and

(d) if so, the facts and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (d) Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE) has cooperation with USA under the Indo-US Agriculture Knowledge Initiative, signed on 12.11.2005. Besides this, there is cooperation between DARE/ICAR and some of the American Universities such as Cornell University and Iowa State University in the field of agricultural research.

Use of organic manure

*495. SHRI M. RAMA JOIS: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken/is planning to take measures to popularize and increase use of organic manure for agriculture and progressive reduction of the use of chemical