

suggestion is made that the entire allocation for APL section is going to be cut in the name of this Food Security law. Who are the APL sections? Anybody who is earning more than Rs.11.80 a day in rural India is considered APL. Already there is 73 per cent cut in allocations for them. Food security according to the definition of FAO is “required food for all sections at all times.” Do you consider a person earning only Rs.15 a month eligible for food security under your proposed Act? If so, will you consider immediately restoring the allocations that you have cut for the APL sections?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Whatever allocations the Government of India is making for the APL category today, that will continue. We have neither reduced nor cancelled that. It is true that one particular note has been circulated from the Food Ministry to the various State Governments and that is the basis for discussion. It is not Government of India's final view. That is in the form of suggestion and a basis for discussion. Let the State Governments give their views. We have received views from some States. We are not thinking of reducing the allocation. Hon. President made an announcement that the Government proposes to enact new law, that is, the National Food Security Act, which will provide a statutory basic framework which would assure food security for all. So, the word is 'for all'. 'For all' means there are certain people whose financial position is comparatively different, that is, on the high side. So, whether we should provide similar subsidy as we are providing to the vulnerable sections. So, these issues are there for discussion and we will take a final view about that. But, we are not going to take a view where the APL will not be able to get anything. It is not the thinking of the Government at all. Definitely, we have to protect the interests of that section also.

Insurance scheme for agricultural products

*23. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state whether Government is considering to declare each village as a unit for the purpose of agricultural insurance compensation and extend coverage of insurance scheme to all agricultural products in all States?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) which is in operation since rabi 1999-2000, is an 'area' based scheme. The implementing States/UTs can notify any contiguous area including 'village' as unit of insurance under the scheme, subject to the condition that States/UTs have pass yield data and the capacity to undertake requisite number of Crop Cutting Experiments to make assessment of yield.

The scheme is available to all the States/UTs on voluntary basis *i.e.* States/UTs are free to opt in favour of the scheme. Till date, 27 States/UTs are implementing the scheme. The scheme envisages coverage of all food crops (cereals, millets and pulses), oilseeds and annual

commercial/horticultural crops in respect of which past yield data is available for adequate number of years.

SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Sir, as per the answer given by the hon. Minister, 27 States have opted for the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme. But, sometimes, even after the insurance coverage of the agriculture and agricultural products, when there is some national calamity, farmers are not getting the compensation because they are considering block as a unit. So, my question is that this being an insurance scheme at national level, whether there is any specific guideline and rules for the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme which is operational since 1999-2000. State Governments have option either to implement the scheme or not to implement. I would like to know which are the States implementing the Scheme and which are not implementing. Do they also have the option to change the guidelines? I would like to know how many States have opted for block as a unit, how many have opted for panchayat as a unit and how many States have opted for village as unit. Particularly, I want to know whether the State Government of Orissa has opted for village as a unit, which has not been accepted by the Central Government.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: This particular Scheme is being implemented both by the Government of India and the State Governments. The National Agricultural Insurance Scheme is practically operating since 1999-2000 till today. It is an 'area' based scheme. We have authorised State Governments that they can notify any contiguous area including village as a unit. We had put only two conditions. If they want to take village as a unit, we have no objection. Village is accepted as a unit under the Scheme subject to the condition that the past yield data and the capacity to undertake requisite number of Crop Cutting Experiments to make assessment of the yield. State Government has to take that data. Suppose, we take village as a unit and the entire village is insured, and if the State Government has no machinery to go and assess the yield and if they have no past data, then, the Scheme will be a total non-starter. That is why, if the State Governments are capable to take up this responsibility, we are happy to authorise the State Government to take village as a unit.

Now, second question, which has been asked by the hon. Member, is regarding States which are implementing and which are not. I am not giving the list of States which are implementing. There are 27 States which are implementing the Scheme. One has to see which States are not implementing - Arunachal Pradesh, Delhi, Nagaland, Punjab, Chandigarh, Dadar and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, and Lakshadweep. The major State, which is not implementing, is Punjab. Punjab State Government feels that whatever compensation we are providing is not sufficient. That is why, they have not opted for the scheme. Another question which has been asked is about the State-wise information about insurance unit. In fact, it is a big list. I have got the information. I have no objection; I can lay it on the Table of the House.

But, for instance, Assam State is implementing in revenue-circles, Bihar is implementing in block, Chhattisgarh is implementing in Tehsil, Goa is implementing in Tehsil, Gujarat is implementing in Taluka, Haryana is implementing in Block, Jharkhand is implementing in Block and District, Madhya Pradesh is implementing in Patwari Halka and Tehsil, Meghalaya is implementing in Block, Mizoram is implementing in circle. Every State has a different pattern, and, therefore, has taken its own decision and we have accepted that.

SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Sir, my submission is that the individual is paying for the insurance. When a person is taking the loan, insurance is compulsory in the States. Now, a person is paying for insurance compulsorily but not getting the compensation because of the 'Block' being the insurance unit. The States have the option to implement it or not. My question is that in case a particular State is implementing it, whether the Central Government would issue compulsory guidelines specifying that if the State Government is implementing it, it must compulsorily make 'village' as the insurance unit so that the poor person, who is paying for the insurance, can get the compensation also.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Sir, as I said, we have authorised States to take appropriate decisions about that. If they want it at the village, they can go for that provided they fulfil two conditions. There is no objection from our side.

DR. K. MALAISAMY: Sir, from the answer of the hon. Minister, it is seen that the scheme has been in existence for quite sometime, probably some decades, and, it is being implemented in as many as 27 States. I am inclined to ask as to what are the all-out efforts on the part of the Government to see that this scheme is promoted and propagated in all States.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Sir, in fact, we have received some complaints from many State Governments. There are certain suggestions with regard to taking corrective actions in the scheme. One Joint Group has been appointed by the Government of India. This Group, after studying all these complaints, has given certain recommendations, which are before the Government of India for consideration. We had decided to call a meeting of the Chief Ministers to discuss these recommendations with them and take a final view. Without taking the State Governments into confidence, we do not want to take any view on such an important scheme.

श्री महेन्द्र साहनी : माननीय सभापति जी, मुझे सिर्फ एक ही सवाल पूछना है कि अगर राष्ट्रीय आपदा से क्षतिग्रस्त कोई राज्य है, तो क्या उस राज्य में ब्लाक और ग्राम लेवल पर कुछ काम किया जाएगा या राष्ट्रीय आपदा के संबंध में जो भारत सरकार का कानून है, उसे लागू किया जाएगा? मैं बिहार से आता हूँ वहाँ पर पिछले साल बाढ़ से राष्ट्रीय आपदा आई थी और इसके बारे में पूरा देश अच्छी तरह से जानता है। हमारे प्रधान मंत्री जी ने इसे राष्ट्रीय आपदा घोषित किया था। मुझे खेद के साथ कहना पड़ता है कि आज तक 14,800 करोड़ रुपए का अनुदान और उससे संबंधित कागजात ऐसे ही पड़े हुए हैं, लेकिन अभी तक उन पर किसी प्रकार की कोई कार्यवाही नहीं हुई है।

श्री सभापति : आप प्रश्न पूछ लें।

श्री महेन्द्र साहनी : मैं इस पर जल्दी से जल्दी कार्यवाही करने की मांग करता हूँ।

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Sir, this particular question is regarding insurance. '*Rashtriya Aapda*' is a different issue. It is true that some of the States are facing sometimes the problem of drought, and, sometimes, heavy monsoon and suffer damages. Recently, the State of West Bengal has faced a serious problem due to Aila cyclone and the Government of India has constituted a team, which has submitted its report. Certain decisions were taken by the Government of India yesterday only, on which we would like to support the State Governments and resolve the issues. Like this, whenever we get a proposal from any State, we do send a team, and, after getting reports from the team, we do take a final view about this, and, we do support the State Government to resolve the issues.

SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Sir, as far as the insurance scheme for agriculture and agriculturists is concerned, I think that there is implementation failure. That is our experience. With regard to the farmers who grow cash crops, this benefit is not being extended to them. The loss to the farmers of cash crops is more than those who grow seasonal crops, and it is linked with the price also. Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether this scheme would be expanded to include cash crop farmers who grow crops like rubber, pepper, coconut, cardamom, etc., with the link of fall in the price of these products.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Sir, there are certain cash crops which have been included in this particular scheme like sugarcane. There are some of the horticulture products which are perennial. Then there are certain crops like banana, turmeric, and jute. Certain crops have been included in it. Other commercial crops, which are essentially dealt with by the Commerce Ministry, are not part of this particular scheme. There are separate schemes where the Government of India has applied its mind and has taken certain decisions.

*24. [The questioner (Shri N.R. Govindarajar) was absent. For answer *vide* page 20-22 *infra*.]

Health facilities in backward areas

*25. DR. EJAZ ALI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the provision of mobile health vans for Dalit Muslims, the number thereof, area-wise; and

(b) provision of health check up centres and provision of medicines/doctors in backward areas across the country?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) As per State Data Sheet, as on 30-4-2009, 310 Districts of country have the provision of Mobile Medical Units (MMU) for rural population especially the vulnerable sections irrespective of caste,