

IMD is issuing district level weather forecast since 1st June 2008 for rainfall, temperature, wind direction and speed and cloudiness for 5 days with cumulative rainfall. A number of advanced forecasting models are being used to generate district level forecast. The district weather forecast is communicated to 130 Agromet Field Units (IMFUs) in the country on every Tuesdays and Fridays for preparation of the District level farm advisory bulletins. These AMFUs are located at State Agriculture Universities, Institutes of Indian Council of Agriculture Research etc. and are supported and managed by IMD. Agro-meteorological advisories, prepared by these AMFUs, include suggestions on farm management action in view of prognosticated weather conditions for crops and livestock. It helps farmer in selecting the crop/variety, sowing period, irrigation management, fertilizer management, pest/disease management, harvest time and post harvest handling of farm produce.

The advisories are communicated through multi-channel dissemination system including radio, television, newspapers, internet, NGOs, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Kisan Call Centres, Extension network of State Agriculture Universities etc.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) (i) In the new service, the temporal range of weather forecast has been increased from 4 days to 5 days.

(ii) The new service has been upgraded and is being operated at district level.

Poaching of intellectual property rights

3680. SHRI SHARAD ANANTRAO JOSHI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large areas has been sown in Pakistan with Pusa-1121 variety and that a similar area was sown there with the same seed last year also;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Pakistani authorities are trying to pass it off as a new variety under the name Kayanat;

(c) if so, the action Government has taken or proposes to take against this poaching of intellectual property rights of the Indian Council of Agriculture Research; and

(d) how will this development would affect the dispute on the issue of Basmati rice in progress in WTO?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS):
(a) As reports available, it is being grown in Pakistan, but not in a major way.

(b) Pakistan Government has not registered the variety Kayanat so far. However, media reports and traders' advertisements on the Internet suggest the existence of generic/trade names like 1121 (Kayanat), Kianat (1121) and 1121-Kiyat-Pussa etc. in Pakistan.

(c) For protection of intellectual property rights vested in 'Basmati Rice' abroad, Ministry of Commerce, Government of India, through Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export

Development Authority (APEDA), under the Basmati Development Fund, have appointed a watchdog agency and a law firm to scan all applications in different countries filed for Registration of Certification Trade Mark and Patents etc. with the names including words 'Basmati Rice' or similar phrases; and pursuing legal cases in respective countries. In Pakistan, a case is being pursued by APEDA in the High Court of Sind at Karachi, opposing the grant of Certification Trademark to Basmati Growers' Association of Pakistan.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research has already filed its application for the protection of this variety under the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act, 2001.

(d) The present complaint from India to the WTO is regarding 'Restrictions on Certain Import Duties on Rice' by the European Communities.

As a first step, APEDA has filed application for Registration of Basmati Rice under the Geographical Indications (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999; and is also holding consultations with the trade regarding the registration of Certification Trade Mark.

MSP for onion

3681. SHRI SHARAD ANANTRAO JOSHI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the major onion producing States of the country like Maharashtra, Karnataka and Gujarat have demanded that the Central Government should fix a minimum support price (MSP) for onion in addition to the 25 commodities for which it fixes the MSP; and

(b) if so, whether any decision is taken by now and if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS):
(a) and (b) The Government of Maharashtra requested to Government of India to declare MSP for Onion like other agricultural commodities. In this regard, it was intimated to Government of Maharashtra that Government of India fixes Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for 25 commodities and onion is not covered within this group. It was also informed to them that for onion and other horticultural commodities of perishable in nature, the Government of India implements another scheme called Market Intervention Scheme (MIS). The objective of MIS is to protect the growers of such crops from losses due to distress sale in the event of bumper crop. The MIS is implemented on the request of State/UT Government willing to bear 50% of the loss (25% in case of North-Eastern States), if any, incurred on procurement of such commodities, which is restricted to 25% of the procurement cost. No proposal from the State Government of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Gujarat has been received for procurement of onion under MIS.