

[17 August, 2000]

RAJYA SABHA

Agriculture Policy which seeks to actualize the vast untapped growth potential of Indian agriculture, strengthen rural infrastructure to support faster agriculture development, promote value addition, accelerate the growth of agro-business and thus create employment opportunities in rural areas.

**Loss of life and property in Maharashtra**

2663. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the total loss of life and property due to floods, heavy rains in Maharashtra recently;

(b) what assistance or relief have been provided by Government in each district of such calamity; and

(c) what steps Government have taken, propose to take to minimise such losses in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARYANA RAO): (a) to (c) The responsibility for distribution of relief assistance and undertaking relief measures at the ground level, in the wake of natural calamities, is that of the State Government. No report regarding loss of life and damage to property in Maharashtra in the wake of heavy rains and floods has been received from the State Government.

**Horticultural Technology Mission for North-East States**

2664. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for opening a Horticultural Technology Mission for North-East States;

(b) if so, when it will start to function; and

(c) state the main objectives and functions of the Mission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO):

(a) to (c) Yes Sir, there is a proposal for implementing a scheme 'Technology Mission for the Integrated Development of Horticulture in the North Eastern States including Sikkim'. The scheme has yet to be approved by the Government. The main objectives and functions of technology mission are integrated development of horticulture in the NE region through convergence, synergy and timely attention to all the links of production coupled with critical intervention for research, post harvest management and marketing, export and processing.

### **Rehabilitation of jute sector**

2665. SHRI GAYA SINGH:

SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Institute of Research on Jute and Allied Fibre Technology (NIRJAFT) has developed a plan to rehabilitate the jute sector, which is fighting a losing battle against the synthetic alternative; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the plan and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) No, Sir. The rehabilitation of jute sector is being looked after by the Nodal Ministry of Textiles. However, the National Institute of Jute and Allied Fibre Technology (NIRJAFT), Calcutta is a research institution engaged in research and development of technology for jute products and diversified uses of jute products, by-products and waste. The Institute has undertaken multi-disciplinary research programmes for value addition and diversification. A large number of products (for furnishing fabrics, knitted products, blankets and carpets) and packaging boxes for transport of fruits etc. have been developed by the Institute, which are now commercially available. The Institute is also paying special attention to decentralized and