

Agriculture Minister's talks with Shri Sharad Joshi and Chief Minister of Maharashtra on the demands of Farmers

2588. SHRI ARVIND GANESH

KULKARNI;

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR;

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE;

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to refer to the reply to Unstarred Question 216 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 18th February, 1981 and state:

(a) whether the demands made by Shri Sharad Joshi the farmer's leader and the Chief Minister of Maharashtra in connection with the demand of better prices of sugarcane, onions and other farm products was discussed with him on 6th, 7th and 8th December, 1980 and if so, what prices he demanded for sugarcane, onions and cotton;

(b) whether Government have accepted the demands and suitable modifications in the prices to be paid to the farmers have been made; and

(c) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (MISS KAMALA KUMARI): (a) to

(c) There was a general exchange of views with special reference to sugarcane and onions. The demand was made that all components of cost of cultivation as well as terms of trade between agriculture and industry should be taken into account for fixing the support prices of agricultural commodities. This was generally agreed to. As regards onions, it was agreed that NAFED and the State Cooperative Marketing Federation would purchase some quantities of onions on prices ranging between Rs. 60/- to Rs. 75/- per quintal. As regards sugarcane, it was clarified that the price fixed by the Central Government viz. Rs. 13 per quintal was only a statutory minimum cane price

payable by factories linked to 8.5 per cent. recovery with full proportionate premium for higher recoveries and the factories were free to pay higher prices. In Maharashtra most of the sugar factories are in the co-operative sector and most of the cane is supplied through the members of Sugarcane Cooperative Societies and the cane price fixation is done by the State Government itself through a Committee of which the Chief Minister is the Chairman. Procedurally the Committee fixes the initial price payable by the cooperative factories in the beginning of the season and then determines the final price based on the actual realisations of the factory. The prices thus paid have been much higher than the statutory minimum.

Prices of Pesticides

2589. SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to put a control on prices of pesticides, fertilizers and other essential commodities to provide essential inputs to the poor farmers at reasonable rates, if so, what are the details thereof;

(b) if not, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government are aware that by not imposing price control, the benefits are going to the multinational and large houses and these houses are crushing the economically weaker sections and poor farmers by charging exorbitant prices?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (MISS KAMALA KUMARI): (a) The prices of major fertilizers like Urea, Di-Ammonium Phosphate, Muriate of Potash and complex fertilisers are statutorily fixed by the

Government. The price of diesel also is fixed by the Government. The prices of pesticides have not been placed under control so far.

(b) and (c) The expenditure on pesticides being a very small portion of total farming expenses of the poor farmers, it is not correct to say that they are being crushed by the prevailing prices of pesticides. However, the question of imposing price control on pesticides is under consideration.

Auction at Bhikaji Cama Place

2590. SHRI KALPNATH RAI: Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in a recent auction of plots at Bhikaji Cama Place a plot 4,500 sq. metres has been auctioned for Rs. 12 crores; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to prevent such monopolistic and capitalist trends of big builders?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI BHISHMA NARAIN SINGH): (a) and (b) The DDA has reported that two commercial plots measuring 1879.92 and 1947.78 sq. meters were auctioned on 27-2-1981 for Rs. 6.51 crores and Rs. 6.56 crores, respectively.

(c) As per policy, the commercial plots developed by DDA are disposed of by way of auction. No change in this policy is considered necessary.

Student Welfare Fund

2591. SHRI KALPNATH RAI: Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up a Council for students welfare and create a special fund for

students welfare at the Centre, on the pattern of the U.P. State Council for students welfare and the fund created for the purpose by the Government of U.P.; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE (SHRI S. B. CHAVAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Allocation for Higher Education during the Sixth Five Year Plan period

2592. SHRI KALPNATH RAI: Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that more resources are needed for higher education; and

(b) what is the allocation of funds proposed for UGC and higher education for the Sixth Five Year Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE (SHRI S. B. CHAVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In the Sixth Plan (1980-85), the outlay provided for higher education is Rs. 485.75 crores, of which the allocation to University Grants Commission is Rs. 280.00 crores.

"Age-Care Home" in Defence Colony, New Delhi

2593 SHRI KALPNATH RAI: Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that an "Age-Care Home" and other joint enterprises to help the aged and the poor is functioning from 99-A, Defence Colony, New Delhi aimed at organising job cooperatives;

(b) whether Government propose to provide financial assistance for this philanthropic organisation; and

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard?