

indigenous manufacturers of DAP. Government has also reduced the custom duty on phosphoric acid from 5% to 2% to enable indigenous manufacturers of P & K fertilizers to procure this important input at reasonable price. Government is also encouraging private sector and public sector companies to explore the possibilities for joint ventures abroad to ensure uninterrupted supply of fertilizer inputs to P & K sector.

Targets for freight loading

*200. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the targets for freight loading for the current financial year;
- (b) whether it is a fact that the revised freight loading targets for the current financial year are unlikely to be met; and
- (c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE): (a) The freight loading target for the current financial year i.e. 2010-11 has been fixed at 944 million tonnes which is 6.31 per cent more than the last year.

- (b) No, Sir.
- (c) Does not arise.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Excessive use of pesticides

1331. SHRI K.N. BALAGOPAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware of the potential hazards of the excessive use of pesticides in agriculture;
- (b) if so, the measures taken by Government to minimize the adverse effects of farm chemicals; and

(c) whether Government has taken any steps to make the manufacturers liable to pay compensation and damages to the affected due to the wrong practices of the manufacturers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Keeping in view potential hazards of excessive use of chemical; pesticides, Government of India has adopted Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as main plank of plant protection strategy in the country. Department of Agriculture & Cooperation has established 31 Central Integrated Pest Management Centres (CIPMCs) for pest/disease monitoring, production and release of bio-control agents/bio-pesticides, conservation of bio-control agents etc. and human resource development in IPM by organizing Farmers' Field Schools (FFSs). Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has also set up National Centre for Integrated Pest Management (NCIPM) in New Delhi for research and development of IPM technologies which minimize the use of chemical pesticides.

(c) Yes, Sir. Provision has been made in the Pesticides Management Bill, 2008 to make the manufacturers liable to pay compensation to the affected farmer or person if the pesticide fails to provide the expected performance or causes any harm.

Suicide by farmers

1332. SHRI K.E. ISMAIL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that suicide by farmers is still continuing in several parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof with a Statewise list for last three years;

(c) whether Government has been conducting some rehabilitation programme for farmers in suicide-prone districts;

(d) if so, the details thereof, districtwise;

(e) whether the number of suicides of farmers has come down in those districts where the rehabilitation programmes were conducted; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?