

(c) what remedial steps Government have taken to meet the situation?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) and (b) The All India Federation of Exercise Books Manufacturers' Associations has represented about the possible shortage of exercise books made out of the concessional paper in the near future, if a rise in the prices of the exercise books in view of the increase in the cost of the paper and labour charges is not approved.

(c) This is engaging the attention of the Government.

United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation

1046. DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA:
SHRI N. P. CHENGALRAYA
NAIDU? SHRI K. L. N.
PRASAD:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what has been the response of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation to the Prime Minister's suggestion for an international agreement on limitations of prices of strategic farm outputs; and

(b) whether Government have taken any further action in pursuing this proposal with other countries, if so, with what results?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) and (b) The Fifteenth FAO Regional Conference for Asia and Pacific held at New Delhi from 5th to 13th March, 1980 welcomed the suggestion of the Prime Minister to initiate a move for an international agreement on the limitation of the prices of strategic agricultural inputs. The Conference adopted a resolution which, *inter alia*, requested the Director General of FAO to convene a meeting of the Fertilizer Commission

of FAO to consider ways and means of stabilising international prices of chemical fertilizers for developing countries, least developed countries and most seriously affected countries.

Deaths due to Crop Failure and Drought in the Country

1047. SHRI C. C. BHATTACHARYA:
SHRI RAMANAND YADAV; SHRI
GANPAT HIRALAL BHAGAT;

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that millions of people are starving due to successive and widespread crop failure on account of severe drought in the country;

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken to meet the situation and whether the demands of the various States have been met, if not, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) if the answer to part (b) above be in the affirmative what are the details thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) The Government is fully alive about the continuing drought conditions in the country and the misery inflicted by it on the rural community. According to the information available from the States, the drought during kharif has affected about 220 million people in eleven States.

(b) and (c) On the basis of the reports of the Central Teams which visited the drought affected States for on the spot assessment and the recommendations of the High Level Committee On Relief thereon, the Government of India have approved ceilings of additional expenditure for purposes of Central assistance for drought relief.

Following Central assistance was provided to the States:

A ceiling of additional expenditure of Rs. 156.95 crores has been approved by