

Cattle Insurance Scheme

*148. SHRI NAND KISHORE YADAV: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government propose to formulate a new cattle insurance scheme;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government have held discussion with various sections of society and public sector insurance companies on the issue;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the time by which Government propose to implement the said insurance scheme?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The details are being worked out.

(c) and (d) Discussions have been held with the officials of the State/ UT Animal Husbandry Departments regarding the main features the proposed scheme should have, to make it more attractive to the farmers and with the representatives of public sector insurance companies regarding the premium rates and steps to be taken for effective implementation of the scheme.

(e) It is proposed to implement the scheme during the Tenth Plan.

Special package to boost agricultural production

*149. SHRI N.R. GOVINDRAJAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government have taken any decision to provide special package to the Agricultural sector with a view to boost the production of agricultural in the country; and
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and the target likely to be achieved by implementation of this package?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) Agriculture has been identified as a key thrust area by the Government. As against a budgetary outlay of 4192 crores in 2004-05, the proposed outlay for agriculture sector in 2005-06 in 5998 crores. The new package for the agriculture sector includes the National Horticulture Mission, Micro-irrigation, National Mission on Bamboo, Enhancing Sustainability of Dry land/Rainfed Farming System and increased flow of Rural Credit. Initiatives

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under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research relate to setting up a National Fund for Strategic Research and Strengthening the KVK network to cover additional 100 districts. These are national initiatives and will help States to increase agriculture production, marketing of farm produce, diversification, value addition and employment generation.

Rabi campaign

†*150. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ. Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Rabi campaign 2004-05 announced by Government has been organized;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the campaign was successful in achieving its targets; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. In order to boost Rabi production, Government has launched an extensive drive and media campaign to advise farmers on the use of quality inputs like seeds, pesticides, balanced NP fertilizers, micro nutrients, pest management practices and improved cultivation practices. Special incentives were announced for States, including individual recognition to the officers, for their outstanding performance for improved Rabi crops production. To ensure timely input supply of fertilizers, seeds, pesticides, credit and irrigation, coordination meetings were held with State agencies, Ministries/Departments as a consequence of which the Rabi foodgrains production this year is likely to be 103.45 million tonnes as compared to 100.01 million tonnes of last year in spite of soil moisture stress conditions in some of the States. Rabi oilseeds production this year is estimated to be at 10.08 million tonnes as compared to 8.13 million tonnes production during last year's Rabi.

Area under forest

*151. SHRI SHANKAR ROY CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) the total area under forests in the country;
- (b) whether the forest cover is decreasing at an alarming rate; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.