

from some individuals and organisations. The national policy on the land issue is clearly spelt out in the Fifth Five Year Plan document.

Land held by absentee Landlords

540. SHRI NRIPATI RANJAN CHOU-DHURY : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state :

(a) the estimated area of cultivable land held by absentee landlords in the country; and

(b) the steps taken by Government to remove obstacles created by the presence of the absentee landlords in increasing agricultural production ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI PRABHUDAS PATEL) : (a) and (b) There is no dependable estimate available with Government of cultivable land held by absentee landlords in the country. Apart from absentee landlordism permitted under the law, in some parts of the country there is also the phenomenon of absentee landlordism prevalent in concealed forms.

The objectives of the land policy have been the removal of such motivational and other impediments to the increase in agricultural production as arise from the agrarian structure inherited from the past. These objectives were sought to be achieved by abolishing all intermediary interests between the State and the tiller of the soil, conferment of security of tenure on tenants and eventually ownership rights upon them. Laws have been enacted all over the country for the provision of security of tenure. A large number of States have already enacted laws conferring ownership rights on tenants.

The draft Fifth Five Year Plan has reiterated that the logic of development in the field of land reform lies in the right of ownership being conferred on all tenants. It is, therefore, suggested that leasing out should be permitted only in such rare cases like specified disability or service in the Armed Forces. The definition of personal cultivation as a condition to resumption of land by landlords emphasises personal supervision by the landowner or a member of his family. The

draft Fifth Five Year Plan has also suggested residence by the landlord in the village or in an area within a definite limit of the village where his cultivable land is situated.

Export of Potatoes

541. SHRI BANARSI DAS : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state :

(a) the quantum of potatoes exported during the current year till the 29th February, 1976; and

(b) the concrete steps which Government have taken to prevent the crashing down of the prices of potatoes ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI PRABHUDAS PATEL) : (a) Information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of Rajya Sabha in due course.

(b) The following steps have been taken by Government to prevent the downward trend of the prices of potatoes :—

1. The National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation has entered the markets for the purchase of exportable varieties of potatoes at a minimum price of about Rs. 45 per quintal.

2. The Food Corporation of India has been entrusted to make limited commercial purchases of potato in the six major potato growing districts of U.P.

3. The Railway Board has been requested to quickly provide adequate railway wagons from potato growing areas to the potato consuming areas.

Applications for allotment of Government accommodation and house building advance

542. SHRI D. K. PATEL : Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received any complaints regarding delay in disposal of applications of Government employees forwarded by their respective Departments to the Ministry of Works and Housing for grant of house building advances and for allotment of Government accommodation on out of turn basis/*ad hoc* basis or

for allotment out of special quota placed at the disposal of certain departments;

(b) the number of applications received in the Ministry of Works and Housing for grant of house building advances, allotment of Government accommodation on *ad-hoc* basis/out of turn basis and for allotment of quarters out of special quota placed at the disposal of the Departments concerned, during October, November and December, 1975 and January, 1976, respectively;

(c) the number of cases which have been finalised and intimation to that effect has been sent to the Departments concerned;

(d) the number of cases in which a decision has not so far been taken and the reasons therefor; and

(e) what steps Government propose to take to minimise delay in disposal of such cases in the Ministry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT) : (a) to (e) A statement containing the required information is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) No specific complaint has been received about delay in disposal. However, applications for House Building Advance or for *ad hoc* or out-of-turn allotment of accommodation are individual matters in which the individuals being interested keep on making enquiries, either directly or indirectly through someone else, to expedite disposal of their applications. Sometimes, a large number of applications are received at a time, and some have to wait while the others are under process or scrutiny. Sometimes the applications do not contain all the relevant particulars and these have to be returned or clarifications/information sought. However, applications have generally been disposed of expeditiously and no specific complaints of uncalled for delays have come to the notice of the Government.

(b) and (c) Regarding House Building Advance, fresh applications were not entertained from 7th November, 1975 to February, 1976, because it was found that the applications already in hand and those already sanctioned were likely to consume

the entire amount provided in the year's budget. However, the number of applications received in October-November, 1975 was 986. All these have already been disposed of.

As for the requests for *ad hoc*/out-of-turn allotment of houses, 540 applications were received during the period October, 1975 to January, 1976; and of these 437 were disposed of and 103 are pending.

(d) The question does not arise in so far as applications for grant of house building advance are concerned. However, the number of cases relating to allotment of Government accommodation pending as on the 20th March, 1976 is 103. The reasons for non-disposal of these cases are as follows :—

(i) The applicants do not furnish full details.

(ii) In some cases, it becomes necessary to have full opinion of doctors i.e., whether tuberculosis is an infection and in active stage or; the extent of incapability in cases of injury etc.

(iii) Cases are sanctioned by a Committee which normally meets once a month.

(e) The question does not arise.

बिजवासन के निकट भारी वर्षा के पानी के निकास के लिए नाला

543. श्री ओडम् प्रकाश त्यागी :

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर :

क्या निर्माण और आवास मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि सरकार दिल्ली के बिजवासन गांव के पास एक नाला वर्षा के पानी के निकास के लिए बना रही है ;

(ख) यदि हां, तो नाले के निर्माण में अब तक कितनी प्रगति हुई है; और

(ग) क्या नाले का निर्माण अगली वर्षा ऋतु प्रारम्भ होने से पूर्व पूरा हो जाने की सम्भावना है ताकि उस क्षेत्र में स्थित मकानों और उद्योगों को बचाया जा सके ?