

is provided to State Governments, ICAR and other Central/State Government Organizations for organizing demonstration of newly developed or improved equipment among the farmers for creating awareness and for helping induction of new technology in agricultural production system.

#### **Seed Banks**

3431. SHRI R.C. SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Seed Banks are in operation in various States;
- (b) if so, the aims and objectives of Seed Banks;
- (c) to what extent Seed Banks are helping farmers in States, particularly Andhra Pradesh for distribution of seeds at right time and at an affordable price; and
- (d) how the National Seeds Corporation is helping the State Seed Banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Seed Banks are functioning in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal and through the National Seeds Corporation (NSC) and the States Farms Corporation of India (SFCI). The objective of the seed bank is to meet the requirement of seeds in situations of natural calamities and unforeseen condition like drought, floods etc. The coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh are prone to cyclones and floods every year. Most of the seed kept in Seed Banks utilized in such exigencies. The Andhra Pradesh State Seeds Development Corporation Ltd. distributes seeds at affordable prices as approved by the State Government.

(d) NSC is participating in the Seed Bank Scheme. It maintains specific quantity of certified and foundation seed as per allocation made by the Government of India and supplies the same to the needy States in consultation with the Department in unforeseen situations. Special attention is given for meeting the seed demand in the North Eastern States.

#### **Central assistance to drought affected areas**

3432. SHRI R.C. SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that this year various districts in several States including West Bengal were hit by drought, affecting the main harvest seriously;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a Central team visited West Bengal to ascertain the ground situation there;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the total quantum of relief demanded by the West Bengal Government to provide assistance to the affected people and the amount released by the Central Government so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Due to deficit rainfall during South-West Monsoon, 2010, the Governments of Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal declared drought as under:

Bihar	-	All 38 districts
Jharkhand	-	All 24 districts
Orissa	-	17 out of 30 districts
West Bengal	-	11 out of 19 districts

(c) to (e) In response to the Memorandum submitted by the Government of West Bengal seeking Central assistance of Rs. 1100 crores for drought relief, an Inter-Ministerial Central Team (IMCT) visited the State from 8th to 11th September, 2010 for assessment of the drought situation and requirement of Central assistance. Further action is being taken in accordance with the procedure in vogue.

#### **Functions of Board of Governors of NIPERs**

3433. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chairman of Board of Governors (BoG) of National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER), SAS Nagar, Mohali, Punjab, is a scientist of repute;