

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: