

(a) whether Government propose to take over wholesale trade in food-grains; and

(b) if so, by when ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHAB SHINDE) : (a) and (b) The Government, in consultation with the Chief Ministers of States, have accepted as a matter of policy the take over of the wholesale trade in wheat and rice by giving the public agencies a more dominant role in the procurement and distribution of these commodities and thereby eliminating the role of the middlemen. Necessary steps to implement the decision are being taken by the State Governments.

SHORT FALL IN FOODGRAINS

1323. SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) what steps Government are taking to implement the crash programme to make good the domestic shortfall of foodgrains; and

(b) whether Government propose to import foodgrains ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHAB SHINDE) : (a) To make up the shortfalls in kharif foodgrains production caused by the unseasonal monsoon this year, State Governments have undertaken programmes for mounting an intensive production drive for raising foodgrains production during the rabi/summer season 1972-73.

The strategy being implemented by the States to increase production consists of :

(i) bringing additional areas under the cultivation of rabi crops, mostly from the areas which remained fallow during the kharif season on account of the deficient and erratic monsoon;

(ii) substantial expansion in the coverage of high-yielding varieties, specially of wheat. Besides, large areas are planned to be brought under 'package of practices';

(iii) providing irrigation from all available sources and creating additional irrigation facilities through implementation

of special minor irrigation programmes; and

(iv) getting the maximum additional production from the quantities of chemical fertilizer available by using recommended mixtures and dosages, evolved by the I.C.A.R.

The Government of India have, so far, accorded administrative approval for a loan of Rs. 147.29 crores for minor irrigation programmes which could be completed by 31st March, 1973, so that they could benefit the rabi and summer crops. Out of Rs. 147.29 crores sanctioned for minor irrigation programmes, Rs. 50.14 crores have been already released. Further releases are being made on the basis of the performance of the programmes. Besides, a total amount of Rs. 80.60 crores has been released to the State Governments as short-term loans for purchase and distribution of inputs like seeds, fertilisers, and pesticides.

The State Governments have geared up the implementation machinery at all levels to ensure timely completion of the emergency production programmes within the stipulated period. Senior officers of the Ministry of Agriculture, designated as Area Officers, are keeping themselves in the closest touch with the respective State Governments to ensure close supervision over field implementation of the programmes.

(b) To meet a temporary short supply situation, limited import of foodgrains on non-concessional basis is not ruled out.

WHITE TIGERS

1324. SHRI THILLAI VILLALAN : SHRI K. A. KRISHNASWAMY :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state ;

(a) whether any white tigers have been brought from Britain to our country to help replenish the species; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. SHER SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir. A white tigress named 'Sheeta' from Bristol Zoo (U.K.) has been exchanged with one male tiger named 'Roop' from Delhi Zoo.

The white tigress has not been brought here to replenish the species, but to infuse new blood for improvement of progeny.

(b) The Bristol Zoo had purchased a pair of white tigers 'Champak' and 'Chameli' in 1963 from the erstwhile Maharaja of Rewa. 'Champak' the white tiger (male) died in 1970 and 'Chameli' has been without a mate since then. The breeding of white tigers in the Bristol Zoo stopped, as they had no other mature-male tiger. They approached the Delhi Zoo for exchange of one of their females with a male, which was agreed to and the exchange was executed in October, 1972. The exchange is beneficial to both the Zoos as Bristol Zoo has a large number of female white tigers, while there is a preponderance of male white tigers in the Delhi Zoo. The freight charge, for the transport of both the tigers to and from U.K., has been met by the Bristol Zoo.

ENCROACHMENT OF FOREST LANDS

1325. SHRI THILLAI VILLALAN : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :-

(a) whether Government have made any survey regarding the encroachment of Government forest lands; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. SHER SINGH) : (a) and (b) The required information is being collected from the State Governments and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha in due course. No survey has been conducted by the Central Government.

VISIT OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL ORGANISATION

1326. SHRI THILLAI VILLALAN : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Director General of Food and Agriculture Organisation, Dr. A. H. Boerma, visited India recently; and

(b) what views and suggestions he expressed regarding self-reliance in Food production of our country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASABEB SHINDE) : (a) Yes, Dr.

A. H. Boerma, Director General. Food and Agriculture Organization visited India to attend the Eleventh Session of FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Far East held at New Delhi from 17th—27th October, 1972.

(b) Dr. Boerma, in his opening address to the Eleventh Session of FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Far East, did not specifically express views and suggestions about India's self-reliance in food production. He only expressed concern about the sharp drop in the agricultural production in the Asia and the Far East Region. He stated that from the three per cent increase recorded in 1970, the preliminary figures for 1971 in the Region unfortunately showed a sharp drop and for the developing world as a whole the increase seemed to have been only between one and two per cent. He further stated that the overall increase of two per cent in the Region was disappointing when compared with the Second Development Decade target of four per cent. He, however, pointed out that the two per cent increase mentioned by him obscured the fact that India's food production grew by a much more satisfactory percentage—a matter of some significance in the light of the present world cereal situation. He also made a favourable reference to the bufferstock of 9 million tons built up in the country.

ESTABLISHMENT OF UNIVERSITY IN PONDICHERRY

1327. SHRI THILLAI VILLALAN : SHRI K. A. KRISHNASWAMY :

Will the Minister of EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to establish a University in the Union Territory of Pondicherry; and

(b) if so, when it will be established?

The Minister of EDUCATION, SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE (PROF. S. NURUL HASAN) : (a) and (b) The Pondicherry Administration has proposed that a Central University may be established at Pondicherry. The proposal is being examined in consultation with the Planning Commission.