

(a) whether Government issued a press note announcing its intention to set up a Pulse Development Council;

(b) whether this council has actually been constituted; and

(c) if so, the composition and functions of the Council ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) A statement showing the composition and functions of the Council is attached.

STATEMENT

Composition and functions of the Pulses Development Council

COMPOSITION

Chairman

A non-official nominated by Government.

Vice-Chairman

Additional Secretary to the Govt. of India in the Department of Agriculture.

Members

Representatives of the States and Central Government :

(1) One representative of each of the State Governments in the Department of Agriculture to be nominated by the State Government.

(2) One farmer from each State nominated by the State Government.

(3) Four representatives of the growers nominated by the Government of India.

(4) Three members of Parliament—two from Lok Sabha and one from Rajya Sabha.

(5) One representative of the Planning Commission.

(6) Agricultural Commissioner with the Govt. of India.

(7) The Director General, Indian Council of Agricultural Research or his nominee.

(8) One representative of Department of Food.

(9) The Plant Protection Adviser to the Govt. of India.

(10) The Agricultural Marketing Adviser.

(11) Two or more persons nominated by the Govt. of India keeping in view their contribution in the field of research or development.

Member-Secretary

(12) Director, Pulses Development.

MUTANT OF COTTON

434. SHRI VENIGALLA SATYA-NARAYANA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the scientists at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute have successfully used nuclear technology to evolve a mutant of cotton that could solve the present cotton crisis in the country;

(b) whether the evolution of this mutant would help the country to reduce its dependence on the import of long staple cotton; and

(c) if so, to what extent ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE) : (a) It is true that the scientists at I. A. R. I. have successfully used nuclear technology for evolving a mutant of fine quality of cotton. Improvement in cotton production however is needed in the short and medium staple categories as well as in the long staple types.

(b) If the mutant becomes suitable for release, it would make a contribution towards Import substitution. 7.14 lakh bales are being imported annually at present in the long staple category (3.21 lakh bales of extra-long staple 1-3/16 inch staple length and above) and 3.93 lakh bales of superior long (34-37/32 inch) and long (31-33/32 inch) staple lengths. A variety known as MCU-5 evolved by the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore has long staple length and good spinning quality. However, the variety is unsuitable for cultivation in the cotton tracts of the North. To overcome this difficulty, the seeds of MCU-5 were irradiated a mutant which possess the long staple length of the parent (MCU-5) but is capable of flowering in 45-50 days and maturing in 150 days. The seeds of the mutant are being multiplied for testing.

(c) It will be premature to venture a guess.

PROVISION OF HOUSE SITE TO LANDLESS WORKERS IN RURAL AREAS

435. SHRI K. L. N. PRASAD : Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question No 540 given in Rajya Sabha on the 24th November, 1971 and state :

(a) whether it is a fact that none of the State Governments have so far sent any project-proposals under the scheme envisaging central financial assistance for provision of house-sites to landless workers in the rural areas; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor, and the steps taken to get the project-proposals expedited ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI J. K. GUJRAL) : (a) and (b) Project proposals under the Scheme for provision of house-sites to landless workers in rural areas have so far been received from five States viz; Andhra

Pradesh, Kerala, Mysore, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. These projects are being scrutinised for sanctioning financial assistance during 1972-73.

It is proposed to call a Conference of the State Housing Ministers to expedite impementation of this scheme.

FAIR PRICE SHOPS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF FOODGRAINS

436. SHRI K. L. N. PRASAD :
SHRI MONORANJAN ROY :
SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Central Government had asked the States to open fair price shops for distributing foodgrains at control prices;

(b) if so, how many States have opened such fair price shops;

(c) whether the price rise in foodgrains is due to defective distribution system of foodgrains; and

(d) whether opening of the fair price shops have reduced the prices ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHAB SHINDE) : (a) The State Governments were advised to strengthen and enlarge the existing system of public distribution of foodgrains at fixed prices by opening more fair price shops.

(b) Fair price shops for the distribution of Government foodgrains already existed in all the States. The number has been increased where necessary.

(c) No, Sir. There are several factors responsible for the rise in prises of foodgrains in the open market. Some of these are—anticipated fall in the production of kharif cereals due to damage by drought