

(b) It is difficult to give any firm estimate of sugar production during 1968-69, at this stage, as production depends upon many factors, including sugarcane production, recovery of sugar from sugarcane, duration of the season, prices of gur and Ithandsari, etc.

COTTON PRODUCTION IN FOURTH FIVE YEAR PLW

275. SHRI M. K. MOHTA : Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have formulated any programme for the centrally sponsored schemes to develop cotton production during the Fourth Five Year Plan period; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHEB, SHINDE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The following schemes are proposed to be implemented :—

- (i) Intensive Cultivation (Central Package areas) in irrigated and assured rainfall areas, over nearly 4.70 lakh hectares annually.
- (ii) Organisation of Mass Plant Protection Campaigns in unirrigated areas.
- (iii) Production of Nucleus and Foundation seed of cotton.
- (iv) Grading of Kapas in Central Package Areas.
- (v) Development of Sea Island Cotton in Andhra Pradesh and Mysore.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE* EARNED ON INDIAN POSTAL STAMPS

276. SHRI M. K. MOHTA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that though India produces about Rupees seventy two lakhs worth of Indian Postal Stamps annually, foreign exchange earned thereon is only Rs. 1.5 lakhs a year;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to popularize Indian Stamps abroad with a view to earning foreign exchange ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS (PROF. SHER SINGH) : (a) Yes: but exact figures regarding foreign exchange earnings cannot be furnished as no information regarding direct sales abroad by stamp dealers is available. But so far as sales by the Post Office itself is concerned, the foreign exchange earned averages about Rs. one lakh per year.

(b) As our stamps are not printed in multi-colour, they are not attractive to the foreign collectors.

(c) A multicolour printing machine is being imported and is expected to be installed in about a year's time when colourful attractive stamps can be issued. Steps have also been taken to improve the marketing arrangements and advance publicity abroad.

FERTILIZER FACTORY WITH JAPANESE COLLABORATION

277. SHRI M. K. MOHTA : Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a cooperative venture for manufacturing fertilizers is proposed to be set up in Maharashtra with Japanese collaboration; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY) : (a) and (b) Information in this regard is awaited from the Maharashtra State Government and will be placed on the Table of the House when received from the State Government

SUGARCANE PRICE

278. SHRI M. K. MOHTA : Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of sugar mills which have agreed to pay Rs. 10 per quintal of sugarcane as suggested by and