

STATEMENT

(a) and (b) During the last kharif season, the hybrid bajra crop (and also the bajra crop of local variety) was attacked to some extent by Ergot disease in parts of the States of Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Madras and the Union Territory of Delhi. The area affected ranged from 0-1% to 15% of the total area under the cultivation of bajra crop in these States.

Only the bajra grains affected by Ergot are harmful for human consumption on account of the presence of harmful chemical substances (Alkaloids) called 'Ergosterol'. The affected grains may even become poisonous in high concentrations of the alkaloids.

The field investigations carried out by the experts of the Central Department of Agriculture were intended to locate the causes of Ergot infection and ascertain the extent of its incidence on the crop so that suitable remedial measures could be prescribed. The extent of concentration of alkaloids in the affected grains was not investigated by our experts. However, no loss of human or cattle life was reported from the areas visited.]

UNEMPLOYED TECHNICIANS

*321. SHRI NIREN GHOSH :

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE : I

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state :

- (a) whether it is a fact that large number of technicians are unemployed in the country ;
- (b) if so, the total number of unemployed technicians during the last 3 years ;
- (c) what are the reasons of unemployment ; and
- (d) the steps proposed to be taken by Government to provide jobs to the unemployed technicians ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR, EMPLOYMENT AND REHABILITATION (SHRI S. C. JAMIR) :

(a) and (b) The total number of technicians seeking jobs on the Live Registers of the Employment Exchanges at the end of 1964, 1965 and 1966 was 1.76 lakhs, 1.98 lakhs and 2.09 lakhs, respectively.

(c) The main reason is the slowing down in the tempo of economic activity in recent years due to recession and other factors.

(d) The various development programmes envisaged in the Annual Plans are likely to provide more employment opportunities to all persons including the technicians.

YIELD PER ACRE OF GROUNDNUT

*322. SHRI M. C. SHAH : Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

- (a) the yield per acre of groundnut during the last 3 years ; and
- (b) the steps taken by Government to assist the farmers for raising the efficiency of cultivation ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE) : (a) The average yield per acre of groundnut during the last three years was as follows :—

Year	Yield per acre (lbs of nuts in shell)
1964-65 . . .	728
1965-66 . . .	509
1966-67 . . .	552

(b) A statement is placed on the Table of the Sabha.

STATEMENT

In addition to the assistance being made available to the farmers for raising the efficiency of groundnut cultivation under the normal oilseeds development and State Package Programme the following assistance is provided by the Central Government under the Centrally-sponsored Scheme for maximised production of groundnut which has been implemented in selected areas of the major groundnut producing States in order to increase the yield per acre