

Stockholm Convention;

- (e) if so, whether the use of Endosulfan be banned nation-wide in the country; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) Pesticides, including Endosulfan, are toxic and are required to be used as per conditions approved by the Registration Committee constituted under section 5 of the Insecticides Act, 1968. If used in the manner prescribed, which is printed on the label and the leaflet, pesticides (including Endosulfan) do not cause harm to human beings and animals. Health problems have been reported in Kasargod district of Kerala, and recently by the State Government in Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka, allegedly due to aerial spraying of Endosulfan in cashew plantations.

(b) and (c) Use of Endosulfan in Kerala has been kept on hold *vide* Government of India notification dated 31.10.2006. Government of Karnataka has demanded ban on Endosulfan under section 27(2) of the Insecticides Act, 1968.

(d) Fifth meeting of Conference of Parties (COP) to the Stockholm Convention held in Geneva, Switzerland from 25 to 29 April, 2011 decided to list Endosulfan in Annex A with specific exemptions under Article 4 of the Convention.

(e) and (f) writ petition (civil) No. 213 of 2011 “Democratic Youth Federation of India vs Union of India and Others”, Hon’ble Supreme Court passed an ad-interim order on 13.05.2011 banning production, sale and use of Endosulfan in the country till further orders and appointed a Joint Committee headed by the Director General of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the Agriculture Commissioner to conduct a scientific study on the question whether the use of Endosulfan would cause any serious health hazard to human beings and would cause environmental pollution. The Committee was also directed by the Court to suggest alternatives to Endosulfan. Accordingly, the Central Government issued instructions on 14.05.2011 to all State Governments/Union Territories to implement interim order of the Court in toto.

Indian farm experts to African nations to improve agriculture

647. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) has decided to send a team of farm experts to African countries to help the nations to improve their agriculture practice;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether these farm scientists explore agriculture potential and help to train manpower in the farm sector there and interact with the farm experts to get a first hand knowledge of cultivation process there; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) to (d) The Department has 4 bilateral Memoranda of Understandings (MoUs) and 2 Work plans with 4 African countries namely Ethiopia, Benin, South Africa and Zambia under which scientist visit various African countries. In last 3 years, 9 scientists have visited 4 African countries with reference to various MoUs/Work Plans/Diplomatic requests.

The Department is also implementing Indo-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) programme since 2010, under which 34 students have been enrolled for the M.Sc. Programme and 15 students for the Ph.D. programme. Besides, 3 trainings have so far been organized for 44 participants.

Shortage of chemical fertilizers during sowing of kharif crops

†648. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that this year at the time of sowing of kharif crops in the country, the availability of chemical fertilizers was less than their demands;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(c) the estimate of quantities of their supply and demand; and

(d) the reasons for inadequate supply in order to meet the demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SRIKANT JENA): (a) to (d) Urea is the only fertilizer which is under partial movement and distribution control of the Government. All other fertilizers viz. DAP, MOP, SSP & NPK etc. are decontrolled/de-canalized since 1992. The availability of decontrolled fertilizers is decided by the market forces of demand and supply. Union Government monitors availability of fertilizers at State level and State Governments are responsible for its tie-up with the manufacturers and importers and further distribution within the State. The State-wise cumulative requirement and cumulative availability of Urea, DAP/NPK & MOP fertilizers during the Kharif, 2011 (April'11 to June'11) is given in the Statement (See below). Supply (availability) of Urea and complex fertilizers (DAP/NPK) during the current Kharif 2011 (April'11 to June'11) has been comfortable throughout the country. There is tightness in availability of Muriate of Potash (MOP) during current year. There is no viable source of Potash in the country as such the entire demand of MOP is met through imports. During the current year, contracting for import of MOP could not materialize due to substantial increase of prices in the International market. The suppliers of MOP are demanding almost US\$ 530 PMT, as against US\$ 470 PMT CFR finalized with China for the second and third quarter of the current year. Canpotex, Canada has indicated the willingness to supply of MOP at US\$ 470 PMT to India for second and third quarter of the current year provided India agrees for US\$ 530 PMT for the last quarter of the year 2011-12. Indian importers are negotiating the price for MOP with foreign suppliers.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.