

Training and infusion of modern farm equipments

*355. SHRI A.W. RABI BERNARD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is a regular programme to increase agricultural output through training and infusion of modern farm equipments in the country;
- (b) whether certain small countries in South-East Asia have better per acre output of rice and vegetables than that in India;
- (c) the reasons for India not reaching those levels; and
- (d) whether Government is aware of modern enzyme-based inputs for attaining agricultural production at much higher levels than that at present?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Capacity building of the farmers through Farmers Field Schools; block and front line demonstrations on improved farming practices are integral part of various programmes of the Government such as "Support to State Extension Programme for Extension Reforms", National Food Security Mission (NFSM), All India Coordinated Research projects of Indian Council of Agricultural Research etc. Modern farm equipments are also being actively promoted under different crop development schemes of the department such as Macro Management of Agriculture, NFSM etc. The Farm Machinery Training and Testing Institutes (FMTTIs) and Central Institute of Agricultural Engineering Bhopal have been providing training to the farmers in the selection, operation, maintenance, energy conservation and management of agricultural equipments.

(b) and (c) India occupies second position in the World next to China in production of rice and vegetables and contributes 21.6% and 8.6% to world production of rice and vegetables respectively (FAO, 2008). Although the per acre output of rice and vegetables in India is higher than many South East Asian Countries, some other countries in the region such as Malaysia and Myanmar have higher productivity than India primarily due to more favourable climatic factors, availability of assured irrigation, use of adequate quantities of fertilizers, use of improved varieties etc.

(d) Government has been promoting organic inputs such as bio-fertilizers viz. Rhizobium, Azotobacter, Azospirillum and Phosphate Solubilising micro-organism, vermin-compost etc. under National Project on Promotion of Organic Farming (NPOF), and other crop development schemes for enhancing the agriculture production.

Rising cost of vegetables

*356. SHRI RANJITSINH VIJAYSINH MOHITE PATIL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether vegetable costs have jumped by 28.9 per cent since last year;