

been referred to West Bengal Government. That Government has promised to send a reply shortly. As the stocks are in godowns the question of damage by rains does not arise.

PRE-INVESTMENT SURVEY OF FOREST RESOURCES

1532. DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are complaints of fraud and embezzlement to the tune of lacs of rupees in the Pre-investment Survey of Forest Resources, a joint project of the Government of India, U. N. Development Project and F.A.O. of the United Nations;

(b) if so, who are the persons responsible for the fraud and embezzlement, what is the exact amount involved and what action Government have taken in this regard;

(c) whether it is a fact that the foreign experts have carried on espionage activities under the cover of survey; and

(d) if so, whether Government propose to take steps to look into the matter before paying their share of 65 per cent. of the cost of the project and/or allowing those "experts" to leave the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE): (a) and (b) No allegation of fraud or embezzlement about Government funds in the Project has been received. There are some complaints against F.A.O.'s employees working under F.A.O.'s administrative and financial control. It is understood that F.A.O. is enquiring into these complaints.

(c) No, Sir. But an allegation to this effect is being enquired into by appropriate authorities.

(d) Government share has already been paid on due dates in accordance with the Plan of Operation signed with U.N.D.P. The question about taking action against the experts does not arise at this stage.

GRATUITY SCHEME FOR WORKERS IN COAL MINES

1533. SHRI C. ACHUTHA MENON: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the recommendations made by the Coal Mines Wage Board for the introduction of a gratuity scheme for workers in coal mines has been accepted by Government; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to implement the same?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI JAI-SUKHLAL HATHI): (a) The recommendation has not been accepted so far.

(b) Does not arise.

WHEAT LYING IN OPEN

1534. SHRI M. K. MOHTA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of wheat purchased by the Food Corporation of India and lying in open at various stations for want of wagons and spoilt due to rains;

(b) the estimated loss in this regard;

(c) the persons responsible for this negligence and the action taken against them; and

(d) the remedial measures adopted by Government to save the rest of the foodgrains from rains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE): (a) No wheat purchased by the Food Corporation of India is lying in open at any Railway station for want of wagons.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

STORAGE CAPACITY

1535. SHRI M. K. MOHTA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of foodgrains procured by Government this year;

(b) the total storage capacity available with Government;

(c) the steps taken to increase the storage capacity; and

(d) how Government propose to store the buffer stocks which they propose to build up this year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE): (a) Out of 1967-68 crops about 6.1 million tonnes of foodgrains have been procured so far.

(b) The total storage capacity, both owned and hired, available with the