

good arrangements for procurement. The Government of India has been insisting for years that regulated markets should be established all over the country. Unfortunately, in some of the areas and some of the regions particularly the State from which the hon. Member comes, the Eastern U.P., the marketing arrangements are not satisfactory. Because of that and despite the sincere efforts of the State Governments in this field, actually the fields do not operate well. So far as procurement is concerned our approach in future also will be to protect the interests of the small farmers. We are interested in procuring as much quantity as possible. Therefore, we are interested in providing better procurement arrangements all over the country in co-operation with the State Governments. I think it should be possible for us to do it. If we look at market arrivals and procurement, by and large 97 to 98 per cent is procured by public sector agencies. This is one thing. Secondly, many of the State Governments—in this context I would particularly like to congratulate the U.P. Government—are giving full publicity by means of radio, leaflets and propaganda and every other machinery to make it known to the farmers that the Government agencies are prepared to buy whatever quantity they offer of fair average quality at Rs. 105. This has been made known to the country and even my senior colleague made statements repeatedly in parliament so that the farmers do not sell at less than Rs. 105. If despite this something has gone wrong, reflect the weakness of the marketing arrangements. We are seized of it and our effort is to improve upon it.

SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA : Sir, he has not answered my question at all.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can meet him separately. Next question.

"SMUT" Diseases in wheat crops

- *34. SHRI SYED NIZAM-UD-DIN : †
 SHRI SWAMI DINESH
 CHANDRA :
 SHRI GANESH LAL MALI :
 SHRI KISHANLAL SHARMA :
 SHRI SAT PAUL MITTAL :

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Syed Nizam-ud-Din.

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that there was serious attack of 'smut' diseases in wheat crops during the last rabi-season, causing serious damage to wheat crop;

(b) whether it is also a fact that at the All India Plant Protection Conference held in New Delhi, in February, 1976, many State Governments apprised the Central Government of mass scale damage to crops due to heavy attack of loose 'smut' in wheat;

(c) if so, whether Government have directed the National Seeds Corporation and other agencies to treat all varieties of seeds with disease control fungicides before releasing the same to the farmers in the forthcoming rabi season; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof and if not, what are the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB P. SHINDE) : (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) to (d) There was incidence of loose smut on wheat in the States of West Bengal, Assam, Bihar, Punjab and Orissa during rabi season of 1975-76. Reliable estimates of losses caused by loose smut are not available.

In the All India Plant Protection Conference held in New Delhi in February, 1976, only the State Government of West Bengal had referred to the problem of loose smut on Sonalika wheat crop.

A team from the National Seeds Corporation and Tarai Development Corporation along with the State Government representatives visited the affected areas and reported incidence between 1% to 2% in respect of crop plots where certified seeds of National Seeds Corporation had been used and between 0.1% to 2.8% in plots grown with certified seeds from the Tarai Development Corporation. Only in one case, the incidence was 3.9%, but in this case it was found that the farmer had purchased loose seed from the dealer which was not in sealed original packing

In case of plots grown with the Tarai Development Corporation's foundation seed, the loose smut incidence ranged from 0.08% to 1% in one case only and in the majority of cases, it was below 0.5%. Thus, the percentage of incidence of disease almost of all cases was within the prescribed tolerance limit laid down in the 'Indian Minimum Seed Certification Standards'.

However, as a safeguard against loose smut, compulsory treatment of the entire foundation seeds produced by the National Seeds Corporation and the Tarai Development Corporation with Vitavax a specific fungicide against the loose smut, is being undertaken. The following measures for controlling loose 'smut' disease in the certified seeds are also being undertaken :—

(i) Organising grow-out test for certified seeds as well as foundation seeds lots in the off-season in Bangalore, to study the incidence of loose smut.

(ii) Subjecting all the lots of certified seeds to the mycelium test in the laboratory. All lots found having incidence above the prescribed limit of 0.5% are subjected to Vitavax treatment.

(iii) If any State Government or purchaser wants to buy certified seeds with Vitavax treatment, the National Seeds Corporation would treat the seed accordingly.

SHRI SYED NIZAM-UD-DIN : Sir, in para 3 of the statement, the hon. Minister has stated the reported incidence of this 'smut' disease only in respect of crop plots where certified seeds of National Seeds Corporation and Tarai Development Corporation were used. I would like to know from the hon. Minister if a survey was conducted with regard to other areas also where these seeds were not used and if such a survey was conducted, what was the incidence of 'smut' disease with regard to those areas and whether it is a fact that it was much higher than what the hon. Minister has stated in the statement.

SHRI ANNASAHIB P. SHINDE : Sir, as far as West Bengal is concerned, a special team of the National Seeds Corporation, Tarai Development Corporation and the State Government's representatives went there and other areas also were surveyed with the help of the State Government.

The Indian minimum seed certification standard prescribed is 0.5 for the 'smut' disease and, by and large, it was found after the survey that it was within the tolerance limit. As the hon. Member will appreciate, if the agro-climatic conditions are difficult because of more humidity, a sharp rise in temperature, etc., then the 'smut' disease spreads faster. But, by and large, it was found, except in one district in Punjab, that it was within the tolerance limit as per the standards I have mentioned.

SHRI SYED NIZAM-UD-DIN : I would like to know from the hon. Minister if a representation was made with regard to the heavy taxes on the fungicides which are used for the purpose of treating these seeds. If so, what was the representation made and may I know whether Government has taken any action with regard to that representation?

SHRI ANNASAHIB P. SHINDE : We have taken action. In fact, in a part of the statement which I have just placed on the Table of the House, all the details have been mentioned with regard to the steps taken by the Government as a result of this. The hon. Member should not be frightened by this. The main disease in this country of wheat was rust and our research activities over the last twenty, thirty and forty years have been directed towards evolving a rust-resistant variety. By and large, this country has done very well and that is why our wheat production is going on very well. Though there are some other minor diseases, we shall be in a position to cope with them and we need not get frightened by this.

SHRI SWAMI DINESH CHANDRA : I would like to know from the hon. Minister about the preventive measures that have been taken by the Government to avoid recurrence of this disease. Number two : Is the hon. Minister aware of the occurrence of this disease in Rajasthan also?

SHRI ANNASAHIB P. SHINDE : Sir, as far as Rajasthan is concerned, of course, I have no information with me about this disease there but I can find out. But in Rajasthan, it was not this disease but it was rust. They were also not the new wheat varieties but only the old wheat varieties in western Rajasthan that got

afflicted by rust, and not by the 'smut' disease. If there is 'smut' disease in any part in Rajasthan, I will try to find out. As far as the steps taken are concerned, I think this question has been repeated. I have already mentioned them in my statement and I would request the hon. Member to go through my statement.

श्री गणेश लाल माली : श्रीमन्, जहां तक डिजीज का सवाल है, यह करीब-करीब सारे प्रान्तों में गेहूं, चावल और जौ को लगती रही है। स्टेटमेंट जौ टेबल पर रखा हुआ है उसमें कुछ प्रान्तों का मेशन किया गया है। यदि और प्रान्तों में सर्वे कराया जाएगा तो यह बात स्पष्ट हो जाएगी कि यह डिजीज करीब-करीब सब प्रान्तों में लगती है। इसके लिए जौ फंगस साइट्स विशेष रूप से कार्बोथीन और बीटावैक्स जिसे कहते हैं, ये दवायें खास तौर से इंपोर्ट की जाती हैं और इंपोर्ट करने में भी उन पर जो कस्टम ड्यूटी है वह 75 प्रतिशत लगी हुई है जिसकी वजह से न गवर्नमेंट एजेंसीज इसका उपयोग कर पाती हैं, जहां तक फार्मर्स का सवाल है वह तो इसका उपयोग कर ही नहीं सकते हैं। मैं इस सम्बन्ध में जानना चाहूंगा मंत्री जी से कि ये कास्टली दवायें जो बाहर से इंपोर्ट की जा रही हैं, उनके बारे में कोई रिसर्च और डेवलपमेंट विभाग से जानकारी की गई है कि इनके रिजल्ट्स क्या हैं? अभी आपने कहा कि दूसरी जो खास डिजीज है उनके लिये कुछ किया गया है। मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि इस बारे में क्या किया गया और उसकी कुल खपत हिन्दुस्तान में कितनी है?

SHRI ANNASAHIB P. SHINDE : As far as fungicides are concerned, the availability is very easy though they have to be imported. Particularly, Carboxin has to be imported. There is no problem in regard to availability in any part of the country. The import duty is a different matter. The hon. Member can take it up with the Ministry of Finance. But to my mind, fungicides do not present any problem as far as application is concerned. In fact, the National Seeds Corporation has given a general assurance to the State

Governments that as far as the foundation seeds are concerned, the various varieties of wheat being supplied to the State Governments would be treated with fungicides without adding to the price.

As far as research is concerned, I cannot say that there would be a definite finding. We find that some of the varieties are more resistant to smut disease. Take the case of Kalyan Sona. This is a very popular variety which is more susceptible to rust, but less susceptible to smut. Now, we have advised the farmers not to cultivate Kalyan Sona because rust is a more deadly disease. Therefore, the purpose of research would be to develop smut-resistant and smut-tolerant varieties and our scientists are seized of the matter.

श्री किशन लाल शर्मा : श्रीमन्, मंत्री महोदय ने अपनी स्टेटमेंट के पहले पैराग्राफ में यह बताया है कि इस रोग के कारण हुई क्षति के अनुमानित विश्वसनीय आंकड़े नहीं हैं। जब कि क्षति हुई है और सब स्टेट्स में उसकी परसेन्टेज बताई गई है। तो मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि जब विश्वसनीय आंकड़े उपलब्ध नहीं हैं तो किस आधार पर यह परसेन्टेज बताई गई है?

SHRI ANNASAHIB P. SHINDE : Sir, how is it possible to make an estimate? I would appeal to the good sense of the hon. Member. Sometimes, one per cent plants are affected and sometimes, one and a half per cent and so on. This is not due to smut disease alone. There are many other things: I am supposed to make responsible statements on the floor of the House. Hon. Member would not like me to make imprecise and incorrect statements. Under field conditions, it is really not possible to give a precise estimate of this nature.

Redevelopment of Chowri Bazar area in Delhi

*35. **SHRI YOGENDRA SHARMA :**†
SHRI JAGDISH JOSHI :
SHRI IBRAHIM KALANIYA :
SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN :
SHRI N. K. BHATT :

Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING be pleased to state :

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Yogendra Sharma.