Difference of quality between traditional and modern seeds

†3104. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI :
SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that by the end of 1970, 1,10,000 varieties of seeds of rice (Paddy) were available in the country;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto;

(c) whether presently only 6000 varieties of traditional seeds, out of these, are found at some places in the country;

(d) if so, the facts thereof; and

(e) whether a huge difference is being found on the basis of nutrients between these traditional seeds and modern seeds being made available by multi-national companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HARISH RAWAT) : (a) to (d) National Gene Bank at NBPGR holds more than 95,000 accessions of rice including land races/traditional varieties. Besides there are around 10,000 traditional varieties available with farmers, ICAR institutes, SAUs and NGOs. The Government of India has taken proactive action in collecting, characterising, evaluating and utilisation of valuable rice germplasm and also conserved in the National Gene Bank. These land races/traditional varieties are being characterized and evaluated for specific traits and being utilized to develop the improved varieties.

(e) There is not much difference in respect to nutrients between the traditional varieties and improved varieties including modern hybrids after polishing. However, there arc certain traditional land races which are known for being rich in iron and zinc content and some of which have local consumer preference, such as 'Nivara', 'Radhuni Pagol', 'Kalanamak' etc.

Price rise of cotton seeds

†3105. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI :
SHRI RAMCHANDRA PRASAD SINGH :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that prices of various cotton seeds in the country have continuously been increasing for the last five years;

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.