

Production of millet

2338. SHRI D. BANDYOPADHYAY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a drastic fall in the area under cultivation of millet which constitutes the main foodgrain for the poor in the semi arid regions; and

(b) if so, the measures adopted by Government to enhance the production of millet to protect the food security of this group of persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TARIQ ANWAR): (a) On account of delayed/deficient rainfall during monsoon season, the area under millets (coarse cereals) during Kharif 2012-13 declined to 178.17 lakh hectares (1st advance estimates) as compared to 206.73 lakh hectares during Kharif 2011-12 (4th advance estimates).

(b) In order to promote cultivation and consumption of millets based food products, the Government of India announced an allocation of Rs.300.00 crore in 2011-12 under the "Initiatives for Nutritional Security through Intensive Millet Promotion (INSIMP)" as a sub-scheme of Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana in 16 major millet growing States of the country.

The programme aims to demonstrate improved production and post harvest technologies in an integrated manner with visible impact to catalyze increase in production of millets in the country. The scheme is also expected to generate consumer demand for millet based products through value addition techniques.

Rebate on diesel used by fishermen

2339. SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a demand has been made by coastal fishermen to increase the rebate on diesel used by fishermen in view of increase in diesel prices;

(b) the rate before revision and the date of revision; (c) whether it is a fact that while revising the rate, a new condition has been imposed stating that fishermen Below Poverty Line (BPL) would only be entitled for rebate; and

(d) whether fishermen's organization has represented for withdrawal of the new condition as there can be no fisherman owning a boat but still under BPL?