

Security restrictions on marine sector

943. SHRI SANJAY RAUT : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many security restriction, particularly for foreign crew, are hurting the marine sector and have resulted in the loss of nearly Rs. 2800 crore in the past two years;

(b) if so, Government's response thereto; and

(c) the details of steps taken or proposed to be taken to rectify the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHARAN DAS MAHANT) : (a) Deep Sea fishing operators have shown their inability in fishing operations in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) since past two years due to conditions of Ministry of Home Affairs for providing security clearance of foreign crew, such as (i) requirement of minimum salary of US \$ 25000 per annum as a condition for grant of security clearance to foreign crew (ii) foreign crew to be restricted to 10-15% of the total crew (iii) relaxation of the minimum salary condition of US \$ 25000 per annum to foreign crew up to 31-12-2013, and (iv) replacement of the foreign crew by Indian crew by 31-12-2013.

(b) and (c) Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries has requested Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) for removal of the restrictions on engagement of foreign crew on deep-sea fishing vessels (DSFVs) due to shortage of trained Indian crew in deep sea fishing. Department has also requested MHA for maintenance of status quo on existing deep-sea fishing guidelines issued by the department, which allow up to 75 per cent of foreign crew onboard deep-sea fishing vessels.

Also, an Expert Committee has been constituted on 1.8.2013 to have a comprehensive review of the Marine fishing policy and to suggest measures for development of deep sea fishing in India.

Continuous use of pesticides

944. DR. R. LAKSHMANAN : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether continuous use of pesticides over the years had made an adverse impact on the fertility of soil;