

(b) the States from where proposals for opening cooperative institutes have been received and Government's action plan for opening new cooperative institute in Bihar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MOHANBHAI KALYANJIBHAI KUNDARIYA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Two proposals one each from Sikkim and Tripura for opening of Cooperative Management Institutes have been received by the Government during last one year. As reported by National Council for Cooperative Training (NCCT), proposals have also been received from State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Mizoram, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand for opening of Institute of Cooperative Management (ICM) in their respective States. No proposal has been received from Bihar. The DNS Regional Institute of Cooperative Management, Shastri Nagar, Patna is catering to the cooperative training needs for the cooperative personnel in the State of Bihar. There is no proposal at present to open any new cooperative management institute.

Research and exploration in Agricultural Universities

1791. SHRI NARESH AGRAWAL : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether farmers are made aware of the researches and exploration being made in agriculture sector in Agricultural Universities, if so, the manner thereof; and

(b) the policy of Government to bring farmers into direct contact with Agricultural Universities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A number of institutional mechanisms are in place to make farmers aware of the researches, technologies and best practices generated by Agricultural Universities (AUs) in the country. The manner in which these institutional mechanisms create awareness to farmers include frontline extension education programmes of the Directorates of Extension of the AUs; Agricultural Technology Information Centers (ATICs) and Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) functioning under AUs. The frontline extension programmes include on-farm testing and demonstration of technologies on farmers' field; training of farmers; organization of various extension activities like farmers fair, Krishi Mahotsav, exhibitions, exposure visits, animal camps; and diagnostic services for soil, water and infected plant samples. Besides, the experts from AUs also provide information to farmers through print and

electronic media including radio, television and mobile phones; farmers'- scientists interfaces like Kisan Gosthi, field days, field visits, diagnostic visits etc.

In addition, visits of farmers are also arranged to research farms of the AUs at their main campus and also to their regional/zonal research stations by different extension agencies operating in the States.

Moreover, the technology inputs like seeds and planting materials of improved varieties; bio-fertilizers; vermicompost and bio-agents; extension literature in printed and electronic form; and livestock species and fingerlings produced by AUs are also made available to farmers.

All of these front-line extension programmes bring farmers into direct contact with AUs.

Study to understand causes of farmers' suicides

1792. SHRI AVINASH PANDE : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has undertaken any study to understand and analyze the socio-economic causes of farmers' suicide in the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether there exists any correlation between suicides due to the indebtedness of farmers and the nature of crops *i.e.* cash crops, foodgrains, GM crops etc. cultivated by them; and

(c) if so, whether Government is planning any targeted interventions in agriculture sector to alleviate the socio-economic distress of cultivators of such crops?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MOHANBHAI KALYANJIBHAI KUNDARIYA) : (a) and (b) Government has not conducted any such study as agriculture is a State subject under the Constitution and the States are primarily responsible for the development of agriculture sector, including welfare of farmers.

Reasons of suicide by farmers, as recorded by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) are family problems, illness, drug abuse/addiction, unemployment, property dispute, bankruptcy or sudden change in economic status, poverty, professional/career