

Observation of expert committee on marine fishing policy

1416. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to an expert committee on India's marine fishing policy, India does not have adequate expertise or resources to exploit waters beyond 500m, if so, the details thereof ; and

(b) whether Government has taken any measures to develop domestic capacity in this regard, if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR.SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN): (a) In the Report submitted by the Expert Committee under the Chairpersonship of Dr. B. Meena kumari for comprehensive review of deep sea fishing policy and guidelines it has been stated that India is presently lacking adequate skill and expertise to exploit the resources in waters beyond 500 meters. The Report mentions that the waters beyond 500 meter depth are not optimally exploited and there is considerable scope for expansion in this zone, mainly for tuna and tuna-like fish species.

(b) The Guidelines for fishing operations in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) have been simplified and issued on 12.11.2014 in order to ensure smooth fishing operations in the EEZ. With the new set of Guidelines, smaller vessels of overall length 15 meters and above are also allowed and encouraged to venture for deep-sea fishing. Financial assistance is extended by the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) under Ministry of Commerce for conversion of mechanised trawlers into mono-filament tuna long liners.

Shortage of fodder

1417. SHRI K.T.S. TULSI : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:-

(a) whether Marathwada region of Maharashtra is suffering from acute shortage of fodder for cattle;

(b) the level of rainfall in the region in percentage terms as compared to normal level; and

(c) whether Government has arranged free fodder camps from end of March, 2015?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR.SANJIV KUMAR BALYAN) : (a) No Sir. There is no acute shortage of fodder for cattle in Marathwada region of Maharashtra.

(b) The region received 52.89 Per cent rainfall from the normal level during monsoon 2014.

(c) No. Government has not arranged any free fodder camps from the end of March, 2015.

Bail out proposal for outstanding bank loans

1418. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering a bail-out proposal from the National Agricultural Co-operative Marketing Federation to stay off a crisis arising from huge liabilities on interest payment on outstanding bank loans;

(b) whether NAFED had played a vital role in the past as Government's prime procurement agency for foodgrains; and

(c) whether NAFED had incurred huge liabilities, as guarantor for private companies under a tie-up arrangement without obtaining Government's prior policy or financial approval, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MOHANBHAI KALYANJIBHAI KUNDARIYA) : (a) NAFED submitted a proposal to the Government for its financial restructuring seeking (i) Government guarantee for an amount of ₹ 1200 crore to NAFED to avail long term loan for a period of 8 years (ii) interest free advance of ₹ 920.21 crore over next eight years to NAFED to meet the resource gap required to service the long term loan of ₹ 1200 crore (iii) investment of equity of ₹ 42.50 crores in NAFED by Government so as to have 51% share in the paid up share capital of NAFED. Subsequently, NAFED submitted a revised proposal envisaging a Government Guarantee of ₹ 450 crores and interest free advance/equity of ₹ 590 crores. Considering the fact that NAFED is a Multi-State Cooperative Society registered under the Multi State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002 without any share capital/equity from the Govt., it was not found feasible to extend the financial help sought therefore.

(b) NAFED is a central nodal agency for procurement of oilseeds, pulses & cotton only under Price Support Scheme (PSS).