

Promotion and development of nutritious varieties of rice

*65. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has chalked out any action plan to promote nutritious black rice "Chakhao" from North-East, having nutty flavour and vast potential of export, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the fresh steps taken by Government for promotion and development of a number of other little known nutritious varieties of rice from various regions of the country?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH): (a) and (b) Black rice "Chakhao" varieties which are cultivated in North Eastern States are rich in minerals, antioxidants and glutinous in quality. However, these varieties are low yielding and their cultivation is confined to specific areas in these States. Research institutions of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and State Agricultural Universities have initiated conservation of different rice varieties including black rice through ICAR-National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR) & Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority (PPVFRA). Research work is being done to develop high yielding varieties and improving quality of black rice. Similarly, research is also being done to develop high yielding varieties of other little known nutritious rice in other States like Karnataka, Odisha and Uttarakhand. Government is implementing various programmes like Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) and National Food Security Mission (NFSM) etc. which can be utilized by States to promote cultivation of black rice and other little known nutritious varieties of rice.

MSP for crops of Rabi season 2016

*66. SHRI NEERAJ SHEKHAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has announced MSP for Rabi crops including pulses and wheat for Rabi season 2016, recently, if so, the details thereof, crop-wise;

(b) the basis and rationale on which such a meagre increase has been announced; and

(c) how Government would check large scale and unprecedented number of suicides by farmers without reasonable and profitable MSP for their farm produces?