

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT): (a) Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, Formar President of India in the year 2004 had suggested to explore Regional cloud seeding with the cooperation of participating states with the effective seeding techniques.

(b) Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune is doing a scientific study on cloud seeding to propose suitable option for rain enhancement.

**Promotion of vocational education in agriculture**

2574. SHRI SYED NASIR HUSSAIN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken any steps to promote vocational education in agriculture;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) undertakes, aids and promotes higher agricultural education in the country.

**Dependency on imported fertilizers**

2575. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been a steep rise in the prices of fertilizer during the last two years which had adversely affected the farmers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that India is overwhelmingly dependent on import of fertilizer to meet the requirement of farmers, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps Government proposes to take to explore innovative ways to increase self-reliance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) and (b) Urea is under