

In the current Indo-Soviet Trade Protocol (Jan.-Dec., 1985), a provision has been made for export of five lakh tonnes of wheat to USSR.

There is comfortable position in respect of wheat stocks in the country and easy availability in the open market.

The Government keeps the option to export wheat from the country, if necessary and feasible.

(c) The Government have launched the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) and the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) with the objective of providing supplementary employment opportunities in rural areas and improving and expanding employment opportunities for the rural landless.

(d) There is no proposal to import any wheat or rice at present.

[*Translation*]

Implementation of Schemes for Providing Houses for Poor People

2114. SHRI MANVENDRA SINGH : Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are considering the question of implementing more effectively schemes to provide houses to backward classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in rural areas so that poor persons belonging to these categories are provided with more houses; and

(b) if so, the details ?

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI ABDUL GHAFOOR): (a) and (b) Housing, being a State Subject, all the Social Housing Schemes are being implemented by the State Governments/U.Ts. They are free to formulate and implement Schemes for different categories/areas.

[*English*]

Interest on Housing Loans

2115 SHRI G. BHOOPATHY : Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal before the Central Government to reduce the interest on housing loans from Banks and other financial institutions; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to implement any special scheme ?

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI ABDUL GHAFOOR): (a) and (b). A proposal recently made will require examination in all its aspects.

Functioning of AIR Station at Port Blair

2116. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that the present station of A.I.R., Port Blair is not fully audible within the Union Territory of A & N Islands; if so, the reasons thereof;

(b) whether Government propose to set a higher-power transmitter to cater to the needs of all the islands during the Seventh Five Year Plan; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefore ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI V.N. GADGIL) : (a) Yes, Sir. The AIR Station at Port Blair is equipped with 20 kw mw transmitter. The transmissions do not cover all the islands in the A & N Islands group. To improve the situation, the installation of a directional antenna on a separate mast has been planned. The work on the second mast is in progress.

(b) and (c). There are no approved proposals for a high power transmitter for the A & N Islands.