

cing institutions. The sum insured in 150 per cent of the crop loan.

(b) The rate of premium is 2 percent of the sum insured for wheat, rice and millets and 1 percent of the sum insured for pulses and oilseeds. In the case of small and marginal farmers, 50% of the premium is subsidised jointly by the Central Government and the State Government concerned on a 50 : 50 basis.

(c) The total sum insured during Kharif 1985 season was Rs. 540.8 crore. The amount of compensation paid during the year 1985-86 was Rs. 4.52 crore.

Losses of crops due to pests

5557. SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the estimated losses of crops due to pests in 1984-85 and 1985-86;

(b) the steps taken to minimize these losses; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to ensure proper quality control of pesticides ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA) : (a) No precise estimates of the total crop losses in 1984-85 and 1985-86 are available. Even otherwise no precise information about the crop losses due to pests can be available as this is a very intricate and complex exercise. However, on the basis of the sample trials and experiments, it has been generally estimated that crop losses can vary from 10-30 percent depending on various factors such as crop, pest, season, location etc.

(b) The Government policies in the field of Plant Protection are all directed towards ensuring saving of the crops from losses due to attacks of pests and diseases. The Integrated Pest Management is the main plank in this strategy. The various steps taken by the Central and State Governments to minimize crop losses due to pests include :—

(i) Surveillance/Monitoring :

Joint Surveillance teams undertake pest monitoring on major crops on regular basis to forewarn about the likely pest development in order to organise timely pest control campaigns.

(ii) Biological Control :

Conservation and augmentation of natural enemies for the biological control of pests of crops like rice, sugarcane, cotton, oilseeds, pulses, apple have been undertaken by Field Stations.

(iii) Supply of pesticides and equipments :

Arrangements for timely availability in adequate quantities and distribution of pesticides and plant protection equipments are made.

(iv) Pest Control campaigns :

Pest control campaigns are organised against various pests to minimise crop losses.

(v) Financial assistance for crop protection :

Both the Central and State Governments have provided financial assistance to farmers for pest control in the form of subsidies on the cost of pesticides, the operational costs and for equipments.

(vi) Research and Training :

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research and the State Agricultural Universities/Institutes have developed pest tolerant/resistant crop varieties and also evolved control schedules for controlling pests and diseases. Training programmes for proper transfer of latest plant protection technology to extension agencies and the farmers have been organised. This is a continuous exercise.

(c) The Government is duly concerned about the supply of quality pesticides and has taken following major steps to that end :—

- (a) While granting Certificates of Registration, the physico-chemical characteristics of pesticides are critically examined and suitable standards are laid/adopted by the Registration Committee to enable the State Governments to enforce appropriate standards for quality of pesticides.
- (b) The quality specifications for pesticides are formulated by the Indian Standards Institution with the help of an Expert Committee called "Pest Control Sectional Committee". The products registered in the country are mandatorily required to meet these specifications for standard of quality.
- (c) Most of the States and Union Territories have notified functionaries under the Insecticides Act, 1968 for the enforcement of the Insecticides Act. Four important functionaries for the purpose are Appellate Authority, Licencing Officer, Insecticide Analyst and Insecticide Inspector.
- (d) Directives have been issued by the Central Government under section 34 of the Insecticides Act on various aspects of quality control. As per these directives, the Licencing Officers while granting/renewing manufacturing licences are required to satisfy themselves about the various statutory requirements.
- (e) State Governments have been advised to set up their own Pesticides Testing Laboratories and as a result there are presently 35 such State Pesticides Testing Laboratories with a total capacity of analysis of over 37,000 samples per year.
- (f) Regular training programmes are organised at the Central Plant Protection Training Institute, Hyderabad to help the State functionaries, inter alia, in the analysis for quality control of pesticides.
- (g) Central Insecticides Laboratory at Faridabad with its two branch

laboratories at Bombay and Hyderabad have been established.

- (h) The Government has also sanctioned a special scheme for the establishment of 5 Regional Pesticides Testing Laboratories at Chandigarh, Bombay, Kanpur, Hyderabad and Calcutta to supplement the resources of the State Governments to analyse the samples of pesticides for supply of quality pesticides to the farming community.
- (i) The Union Ministry of Agriculture keeps organising special campaigns to check the quality of pesticides in various States. It also holds meetings with the State representatives for making suitable recommendations to the States for improving the status of quality control in their respective States.

Artists Selected for Programmes of AIR Station, Silchar

5558. SHRI SUDARSAN DAS : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) the criteria for selecting Artists for programmes in Song and Drama sections of Silchar station of All India Radio; and

(b) the principles followed in respect of allotment of programmes to artists, casual announcers and drama troupes by the Silchar Station of All India Radio ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI V.N. GADGIL) : (a) and (b). The artists for music and Drama Programmes are selected initially on the basis of their Audition tests. They are thereafter invited to perform as per programme exigencies.

Selection of Drama artists is made primarily with reference to the role in the plays chosen for broadcast. Graded Drama troupes/voices are booked on the basis of their experience and quality vis-a-vis the requirements of the play selected for broadcast.