

State	Varieties	Production in 1977-78 (Thousand tonnes)
Bihar	Nicotiana Tabacum	12.2
U. P.	Nicotiana Rustica	7.0
All India	Nicoliana Tabacum	0.9
	Nicotiana Rustica	21.4
	Nicotiana Tabacum (Virginia)	133.6
	Nicotiana Tabacum (Others)	290.2
	TOTAL ALL-INDIA	445.2

(b) According to the available information, in Andhra Pradesh, which alone accounts for about 45 per cent of the total tobacco production in the country, there is substantial production of FCV tobacco in 1978-79 and in addition, there are some carry-over stocks of FCV tobacco from the previous crops.

(c) There are no indications of any crash in prices of tobacco. The whole sale price index of raw tobacco which showed a fall from 139.0 in January to 131.0 in February has again moved up to 139.9 for the week ending 10th March, 1979. As regards prices in various Centres in the country, it was mainly in some places in the States of Gujarat and Karnataka that the prices of certain varieties of tobacco were low in February but have improved again in March 1979. To improve the price situation, especially in Andhra Pradesh, the Central Government has already directed the S.T.C. to purchase 10,000 tonnes of FCV tobacco from Andhra Pradesh from 1978-79 crop, on Government account. This is to be purchased from the growers and growers' co-operatives. In addition, the S.T.C. will make a commercial purchase of about 5,000 tonnes.

(d) The information is being collected and will be placed at the table of the Sabha as soon as possible.

#### Chief Ministers' Conference on the Issue of Overdue Debts of Agriculturists

5678. SHRI M. N. GOVINDAN NAIR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Chief Ministers' Conference was held in New Delhi in 23rd February, 1979 under the initiative of Maharashtra Chief Minister to obtain consensus on the issue of mounting overdue debts of the agriculturists and the need for substantial Central assistance in solving this problem; and

(b) if so, the details and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH): (a) The Chief Minister of Maharashtra had written to the Prime Minister on 25th February, 1979 that he had arranged an informal meeting of the Chief Ministers on 24th and enclosed with his letter a memorandum signed by some of the Chief Ministers. The memorandum raised issues which required to be considered in the broader perspective of the country's needs and measures required to deal with the economic situation. It also included a reference to rescheduling of past debts, lowering of interest rates, stabilisation arrangements for long-term loans and provision for relief and guarantee fund.

(b) the memorandum refers to effective policy framework in agriculture credit which should include (a) re-scheduling of past debts so as remain within the repaying capacity arrived at on realistic basis; (b) lowering of interest rates to 6.7 per cent for rescheduled and future debts so as to reduce the burden on the farmer's limited repaying capacity; (c) extension of coverage from the credit stabilisation funds to rescheduled instalments of loans for land development also by suitable amendment to the R.B.I. Act; (d) adequate provisions in relief and guarantee funds to cover loans which have become irrecoverable for reasons beyond the control of the farmer. This relief should cover the additional interest burden on rescheduled debt.

There is already a provision for re-scheduled of short-term loans to medium-term loans by recourse to the National Credit Stabilisation Fund of the Reserve Bank of India. The State Cooperative Banks are also maintaining stabilisation funds.

Risk fund is being provided under the special programmes with reference to the loans advanced to the weaker sections. The cooperative banking institutions are also expected to build up bad debt reserves.

The rates of interest on term loans re-financed by ARDC have been recently reduced. Loans for the same purpose by Land Development Banks, even if they are not re-financed by ARDC, have been recently reduced. Loans for the same purpose by Land Development Banks, even if they are not re-financed by ARDC, are also expected to carry the same rate of interest. In case of short-term loans, following the reduction in the refinancing rate by the R. B. I. and abolition of tax on interest, the rates of interest charged to ultimate borrowers by cooperatives have generally been reduced by about one per cent.

Regarding long-term loans from Land Development Banks, there is provision

for re-scheduling of loans in areas affected by natural calamities. Appropriate arrangements for Land Development Banks to provide extension of loans due from borrowers in case of occurrence of natural calamity are under discussion with the Reserve Bank of India. In the States where overdues had increased due to occurrence of natural calamities, special steps are being evolved by the Reserve Bank of India and A. R. D. C. in consultation with the State Governments.

#### Central Government Employees without Accommodation in 'A' and 'B' Class Cities

5679. SHRI VASANT SATHE: Will the MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING AND SUPPLY AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Central Government Employees who have put in more than 10—15 years of service without housing facilities at Delhi, Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, Kanpur, Nagpur, Agra and other big class cities in the country;

(b) details of total employees at Class A and Class B cities in the country;

(c) the number of employees provided with accommodation as on 31st March, 1978;

(d) the total number of flats category-wise available for the employees in the above cities, city-wise as on 31st March, 1976 and investment made on construction of additional accommodation during the last two years and allocations made for the next year; and

(e) whether Category B cities have not received due share for providing Housing facilities to the Central Government Employees during the last few years and the action taken/proposed to ensure greater attention for provision of housing facilities at these places?