

ports that U.S.A. has refused to supply more than 35 lakh tons of foodgrains as against our requirements of 70 lakh tons during 1968; and

(b) if so how it is proposed to secure the balance of the quantity of foodgrains?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE):** (a) and (b). The preliminary estimate of requirements of imported foodgrains from all sources during 1968 is 75 lakh tonnes. It is too early to say from what sources we would be able to cover these total requirements. An agreement has already been signed with the U.S. Government on the 30th December, 1967 for supply of 30 lakh tonnes of wheat and 5 lakh tonnes of milo during the first six months of 1968. Negotiations for an agreement for further supply of foodgrains during the second half of 1968 will be started in due course.

#### GHERAOS IN WEST BENGAL

**496. SHRI SITARAM KESRI:** Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of workers thrown out of jobs and the factories closed down due to Gheraos in West Bengal during the current year; and

(b) whether Government have taken any measures to rehabilitate such workers and ensure the resumption of factories?

**THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI HATHI):**

(a) The subject matter of the question falls in the State sphere and information is not available with the Government of India.

(b) Necessary action in this regard is being taken by the State Government, with the assistance, wherever necessary, of the Government of India.

#### SHORTAGE IN FOREST WEALTH

**497. SHRI SITARAM KESRI:** Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the forest wealth for purposes of industry would run short in the coming year; and

(b) if so, the steps which Government propose to take in this regard?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE):** (a) Yes Sir; it is so apprehended.

(b) Necessary steps are being taken by State Govts. and Union Territory Administrations for protection of Forests and for meeting requirements of industries the following main measures have been initiated:—

(i) A centrally sponsored scheme of "Plantation of quick growing species" to meet the raw material requirements of paper and pulp had been included in the Third Plan. An area of 84,000 hectares has been planted up under this scheme during the Third Plan. The anticipated achievements for the years 1966-67 and 1967-68 are 1,20,000 hectares. The scheme is to continue during 1968-69 also.

(ii) Under another scheme of "Plantation of Economic species" which has been in operation in the Third Plan as well as thereafter, large scale plantations of timber species of industrial use (e.g. matchwood, plywood etc.) has been raised.

(iii) At present a large forest area in the country is understocked and is in need of urgent restocking. With a view to fully stock these areas, a scheme of Rehabilitation of Degraded Forests has been implemented in the Second and Third Five-Year Plans and is being continued since 1966-67.