

Ghauri Missiles

102. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :-

(a) whether Government is aware of the recent test firing of "Ghauri" missile by Pakistan; and

(b) the reaction of the Indian Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) :

(a) Yes Sir. Government have been press reports about the officially claimed test firing of an intermediate range missile by Pakistan.

(b) Government closely monitors all developments including those relating to Pakistan's missile programme. India is concerned over Pakistan's missile programme and its impact on the region's security. Government of India is committed to taking all necessary steps to safeguard its security and national interest in accordance with its own threat perceptions.

Price of Onion

103. SHRI C.P.M. GIRIYAPPA :
SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA VARMA :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether onion was sold at Rs. 25 per kilogram in most parts of the country two months ago;

(b) if so, the factors responsible for such steep rise in the price of onion;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to check the steep increase in the prices of essential commodities; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) During January and February, 1998, the prices of onions in the country were in the range of Rs. 12 to Rs. 27 per Kg.

(b) The main factors responsible for the rise in the prices of onions were the damage to the onion crop caused by the excessive and untimely rains in the onion producing areas, incidence of plant disease and the consequent delay in the arrival of kharif crop.

(c) and (d) The Government had taken a number of steps to control the prices of essential commodities. These, inter alia, included distribution of such items through the public Distribution System and Co-operative Stores and measures to increase their production in the country.

[Translation]**Loss to Soyabean Crop**

104. SHRI ASHOK ARGAL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the crop of soyabean is getting affected from rust disease for the last few years;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the research studies made for the prevention of this disease and the areas affected by this disease during the year 1997-98, State-wise;

(c) whether Jawaharlal Nehru Agriculture University, Jabalpur has sent any proposal to Indian Agriculture Research Council in this regard; and

(d) if so, the action being taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) and (b) Soyabean rust caused by fungi 'Phakopsora pachyrhizl' is a matter of concern as it has assumed eminence in the main soyabean growing belt of the country in the last 3-4 years. The rust is an obligate parasite i.e. it survives only on living plants viz. soyabean and some other collateral host.

Till 1994, the rust was confined to North-eastern hills and had not been a problem for major soyabean growing areas to prioritise it for breeding research. After 1994, moderate to severe incidence of Soyabean rust has been reported from Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh and Kerala.

Soyabean yield losses ranging from 30-100% from M.P., 20-80% from Karnataka 50-70% from Maharashtra and 90-100% from Tamil Nadu have been reported.

Detail-wise areas affected in 1997-98 State-wise are being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

Research Studies made for the prevention of rust disease in soyabeans include :

- (i) Priority in developing resistant varieties to soyabean rust in their breeding programmes. The work is being undertaken by National Research Centre for Soyabean, Indore in Consultation with Jawaharlal Nehru Krishi Vishw Vidyalyaya (JNKVV), Jabalpur.
- (ii) Study on Epidemecology and Integrated Management of Soyabean rust in Karnataka by University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, the Project came in operation w.e.f. from 2.4.98 with an outlay of Rs. 9,92,360 for a period of three years.
- (iii) Visit of an Expert Team from G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar to the affected fields in October, 1997.

(c) and (d) A project proposal entitled 'Epidemiology and Management of Soyabean rust' has been received from the JNKVV, Jabalpur for grant under ICAR Cess Fund. The Project is under active consideration of the ICAR.

Agriculture Science Centres

105. SHRI SURESH CHANDEL :
SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN :
SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA'
SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV :
SHRI JAYSINHJI CHAUHAN:
SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK :
SHRI MADHAVRAO PATIL :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government propose to open new Agriculture Science Centres in various parts of the country;

(b) if so, the likely locations thereof and the criteria fixed for setting up such centres, State-wise;

(c) whether the Government propose to relax the criteria for opening up such centres particularly in the backward areas and in hilly regions;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government also propose to impart special training programme using modern technology to encourage the farmers and to increase the production of fruits and vegetables using high yielding varieties of seeds;

(f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(g) the details of the Agriculture Science Centres set up during the last three years, State-wise;

(h) whether any study has been conducted into the working and achievements of such centres; and

(i) if so, the details thereof and the action taken to remedy the shortfall, if any, by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) Yes, Sir. The Government have already established 261 Krishi Vigyan Kendras in 255 districts. Further, there is a proposal to strengthen the Zonal Agricultural Research Stations (ZARS) of the State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) to take up the additional functions of KVKs in 53 districts. The opening of KVKs in the remaining districts will depend upon the availability of adequate funds for the purpose.

(b) to (d) The locations of the existing 261 KVKs and 53 districts proposed for strengthening of the Zonal Agricultural Research Stations to take up the additional functions of KVK is given in Statement-I and II enclosed.

The criteria for setting up of such centres are the districts with low productivity & high potentials, coastal and tribal districts of backward and hilly regions and high productivity having irrigation & other infrastructural facilities.

(e) and (f) The mandate activities of the KVKs include vocational skill-based training of farmers, front-line demonstrations, on-farm testing and inservice training of extension functionaries to update their knowledge and skills in modern agricultural technology including fruits & vegetables. So far, the existing KVKs have organised 1.35 lakhs training programmes to benefit 30.76 lakhs farmers during 1977-78 to 1996-97. Out of these, about 24 thousand training programme in horticulture (fruits & vegetables) were organised to benefit 4.89 lakhs farmers.

(g) Twenty KVKs were set-up during the last three years out of 78 KVKs approved for establishment during 8th Plan. State-wise details are given in Statement- III & IV enclosed.

(h) and (i) The working and achievements of KVKs have been evaluated by the nine Quinquennial Review Teams (QRTs) in 1993. The recommendations of the Committees have been implemented for improving the functioning of these Centres.

Statement - I

Krishi Vigyan Kendras

S.No.	Name & Address of KVK	Host Organisation	Estt. year
1	2	3	4
Andaman & Nicobar Islands (1)			
1	Training Organiser, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Co CARI, Port Blair-744101 (A&N)	The Director, Central Agril. Research Institute, Port Blair-744101 (A&N)	1982
Andhra Pradesh (16)			
1	Training Organiser, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Opp. Rama Krishna Temple, UNDI, Rayalam Bhimavaram West Godavari-06 (AP)	Vice-Chancellor, Andhra Pradesh Agril University, Rajendra Nagar, Hyderabad-500030	1985
2	Training Organiser Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Malyal Farm, Village Malyal Warangal-506 101 (AP)	- do -	1984
3	Training Organiser, Krishi Vigyan Kendra Agril. Research Station, Amadalavaka, Shrikakulam-532523 (AP)	- do -	1984
4	Training Organiser, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, DCMS Building, Kamlenagar, Anantpur (AP)	- do -	1983