

1. Thirty-ninth Report regarding paragraph 75 of the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year 1969-70, Central Government (Civil) relating to All India Radio.
2. Forty-fourth Report regarding Chapter III of Audit Report (Civil), 1970 and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year 1969-70 on Revenue Receipts relating to Union Excise.

COMMITTEE ON ABSENCE OF MEMBERS FROM THE SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

FIFTH REPORT

SHRI S. C. SAMANTA (Tamluk) : I beg to present the Fifth Report of the Committee on Absence of Members from the Sittings of the House.

12:23 hrs.

STATEMENT *RE*. CEILING ON AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE
(SHRI F. A. AHMED) : I beg to lay on the Table a statement on Ceiling on Agricultural Holdings.

STATEMENT

I have seen reports in a section of the press saying that the Ministry of Agriculture had distorted the recommendations of the Central Land Reforms Committee. In view of the importance of the matter I wish to make a statement clarifying the position.

In the statement made in this House on 4.8.1971 about the recommendations of the Central Land Reforms Committee I said that "the ceiling for a family of five members may be fixed within the range of 10 to 18 acres of perennially irrigated land or irrigated land capable of growing two crops." A similar statement was made in the Rajya Sabha by my junior colleague Shri A. P. Shinde on the same day. As will appear from the proceedings of the Rajya Sabha of August 4, 1971 while clarifying the position about irrigated land Shri Shinde made it clear that in referring to irrigated lands the understanding of the Land Reforms Committee was that perennially irrigated lands or lands which got water for two seasons from government sources should be taken into account. This position was subsequently made clear in the Lok Sabha on 15.11.1971 in answer to Starred Question No. 14. In the statement laid on the Table of the House in answer to that question it was mentioned that "the ceiling for a family of five members may be fixed within the range of 10 to 18 acres of perennially irrigated land or land with assured irrigation from government source for growing two crops." The Government's stand has been reiterated in subsequent statements including the one made in the House on the 17th of this month.

A reference to clause (d) of S. 14-K of the West Bengal Land Reforms (Amendment) Act which was enacted on 8.2.1971 during President's Rule in that State will make it abundantly clear that when laying down certain ceiling limits for irrigated land the Government of India had in mind land irrigated from Government sources. In the West Bengal Law irrigated land has been defined as land irrigated from "any State Canal Project or State (power driven deep tube-well) irrigation Project." The West Bengal Act was amended after very careful consideration and after consulting the Parliamentary Consultative Committee.

I may add that similar provisions exist in several State Ceiling Laws enacted years