

would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there are any News Units set up in Radio Stations located outside the headquarters of States and Union Territories and if so, at how many such places and what is the basis for setting up of such News Units and whether Sambalpur, which is an important place in Orissa having justification for setting up of a News Unit, does not come under that category.

SHRI V. N. GADGIL : Sir, out of 88 All India Radio Stations, there are 46 Radio Stations where there are no News Units. The policy is that News Units should be established firstly at those Radio Stations which are located at State Capitals, and secondly, where plenty of news is available which requires to be broadcast. As far as Sambalpur is concerned, everyday two news bulletins in regional language are relayed from Cuttack. In addition, there is a full-time AIR Correspondent posted there. Thirdly, there are District News Letters in which thrice a week Sambalpur local news is widely broadcast.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : Sambalpur is an important place in Orissa which can even be called the second capital of the State. About one crore of population around that place depends on the Sambalpur Radio Station. This is an IADP area and is agriculturally developed, with Hirakud Dam project nearby. There are industrial complexes also like Rourkela, Rajgangpur, Brajaraj Nagar, etc. Lot of local news is there and the AIR Cuttack is not able to cater to that because of pressure of news from other twelve districts of the State. The two news bulletins, one for five minutes in the morning and the other for ten minutes in the evening, from AIR Cuttack are not sufficient to cater to the needs of the entire Sambalpur region. Furthermore, Sambalpur has a different culture in Orissa and has a dialect which is also different from the standard Oriya language. Most of the people in rural areas do not fully understand the Oriya language. Therefore, there was a demand from the public that this being a radio station mainly for agricultural area, the broadcasts relating to the agriculture, should be in the local dialect, and the Radio Station is doing that now. So, in view of all this and for the full achievement of the purpose behind the establish-

ment of the Sambalpur Radio Station, I would like to know whether the hon. Minister will sympathetically consider the setting up of a Regional News Units there and the broadcasting of this regional news programme in local dialect.

SHRI V. N. GADGIL : Our survey shows that there is not enough news to justify setting up of a news unit there, but what I can do is to ask the local Director to include more items of Sambalpur news in the existing bulletins.

As far his suggestion that a complete news unit should be established there at this point of time, I cannot make any commitment, because I have to find out the cost-benefit ratio from financial angle and then only I can reply.

[Translation]

SHRI JAGDISH AWASTHI : As the hon. Minister has just now stated in his answer the regional news units of All India Radio are established in the capitals of States and Union Territories where there is plenty of news available. Kanpur is a big industrial city of north India. No news bulletin unit has been set up there so far and no news bulletin are broadcast from there. Will the hon. Minister take into consideration the importance of Kanpur for the setting up of a regional news unit there ?

[English]

SHRI V. N. GADGIL : As I said at the outset, out of 88 places, there are a number of places where there are no units. Then we have also to follow a consistent policy in response to any particular demand and within those parameters I will consider it.

[Translation]

Production and Export of Potatoes

*642. **SHRI BAL RAM SINGH YADAVA :** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been a bumper potato crop this year which is far in excess of the requirement of the country;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to export surplus potatoes;

(c) if so, the details in this regard; and

(d) if not, the difficulty being experienced in doing so ?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI BUTA SINGH) :

(a) The production of potatoes during 1983-84 reached a record level of 122.5 lakh tonnes. During the year 1984-85 it is expected that the production of potatoes is likely to exceed the level reached in 1983-84. However, the per capita consumption of potato is low in India as compared to many other countries.

(b) to (d) Export of potatoes is allowed freely under the present Policy. But actual export of potatoes has declined over the years for various reasons including uncompetitive price, problems of quality and standards, etc.

SHRI BAL RAM SINGH YADAVA : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, as the hon. Minister has stated in his answer, permission has been given for the unrestricted export of potatoes but as a result of various constraints as regards non-competitive price and quality etc. there has been a decline in the actual export of potatoes. I want to know from him the steps taken by Government to remove these constraints so that potato production is stepped up in States and we are able to push up its export.

SHRI BUTA SINGH : Sir, I have stated some of the constraints in my main answer. Government have permitted potato growers to take to other alternatives like preparation of fried potato, potato chips etc. It would consume about 40 thousand tonnes. Besides this, Government are encouraging preparation of starch from low grade potatoes, converting them into potato flakes, potato mash and preparation of dry and dehydrated chips etc. In order to achieve the maximum yield of potatoes the farmers are being supplied with good quality seeds. Breeding centres have been set up throughout the country and experiments are being carried out through the State Governments. Then, the good quality seeds developed there are distributed so that the quality of potatoes is improved. I have stated in my main answer that there are some constraints in the

matter of export of potatoes. For example there is the packaging problem. We take help in that also.....

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Financial Assistance to States for Water Supply

*629. **SHRI LAKSHMAN MALLICK :** Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING be pleased to state :

(a) the criteria of granting financial assistance to State Governments under Centrally Sponsored Accelerated Rural Water Supply Scheme;

(b) whether Government of Orissa have approached the Union Government for some additional assistance for the above scheme to achieve the targets fixed under the 20-Point Programme; and

(c) if so, when and on what basis ?

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI ABDUL GHAFOOR) :

(a) Funds under the Centrally Sponsored Accelerated Rural Water Supply scheme are allocated to various States in consultation with the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance. The allocation is based on the number of problem villages to be covered, their population, the resource gap of the States for the programme, special problems of hilly and backward States and the Minimum Needs Programme provision made by the States in their own budgets. The capacity to utilise the funds and the targets for each state for coverage of problem villages is also taken into account.

(b) and (c) During the five year period 1980-85, grants amounting to Rs. 35.87 crores were released to the Govt. of Orissa under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme. In addition, an amount of Rs. 850 lakhs was also released to them under the incentive scheme during 83-84.