

Dr. Katju expressed himself in favour of awarding prizes to villages for better production instead of individuals as was the prevalent practice. For this purpose farmers' organisation was essential. By joining in such organisations they could double their production, he added.

He concluded by appealing to the farmers to make a firm resolve to establish true democracy in every village of the country.

Among others who addressed the Convention were Shri S.N. Mushran, Shri K.D. Sharma, Secretary, Bharat Krishak Samaj and Shri M.C. Bondriya, Secretary, Madhya Pradesh Krishak Samaj.

Shri Mushran expressed the hope that the farmers of the State will ultimately benefit through the Krishak Samaj.

Shri K.D. Sharma praised the efforts of Madhya Pradesh Krishak Samaj which had organised the State Convention and was making rapid progress to help-build the cause of agriculture and the agriculturists. He also congratulated the State Samaj for enrolling more than 400 life members of the Bharat Krishak Samaj.

Shri Bondriya in his speech gave an account of the formation of the State Samaj and said that but for the interest shown by Dr. P.S. Deshmukh and the co-operation of the State leaders it would have been hard for Madhya Pradesh to launch the Krishak Samaj movement in the State.

On the occasion of the Convention subject committees were also formed to discuss subjects like animal husbandry, agricultural implements, land reforms, extension of forests and agricultural development. There were lively discussions in these committees.

The Convention passed many resolutions which urged the Government to exempt seeds from sales tax; establish co-operative societies for marketing of agricultural produce; give at least 50 percent representation of cultivators on marketing committees; entrust panchayats to distribute taqavi; provide lift irrigation facilities; take off restrictions imposed on cultivation of opium in sugarcane areas; provide mechanics in tehsils to repair pumps; eliminate minimum charges for electric pumping

sets as they were not used in monsoons; provide cropwise mixtures of inorganic manures and implements for applying them and fix minimum prices of agricultural produce on cost of production basis.

The Convention decided to send a delegation of 150 farmers from the State to the National Convention.

WEST BENGAL FARMERS' CONVENTION

The second Convention of the State Krishak Samaj, West Bengal was held on February 1 and 2 at Beharampur in the District of Murshidabad. Dr. R. Ahmad, State Minister for Agriculture presided over the deliberations. He exhorted the farmers to improve the agricultural production to meet the deficit of foodgrains which the country was facing.

Among others who addressed the meeting were Shri Surendra Narayan

LIFE MEMBERS

If you are a Life Member of the Bharat Krishak Samaj, you are cordially invited to attend the Fourth National Convention at New Delhi. Railway Concession Certificates have been sent to all life members from the Central Office, New Delhi. If you have not received the Railway Concession Certificate by now you must immediately write for it to the Central Office at New Delhi.

Singh, Chairman, Reception Committee; Shri Hiranmaya Banarjee, I.C.S., Development Commissioner, West Bengal; Shri J.K. Roy, District Collector, Murshidabad; Shri Rash Behari Chaudhry, Vice-President, Paschim Bango Krishak Samaj; Shri Debnath Das, Secretary, Paschim Bango Krishak Samaj and Shri Raikinkar Chaudhry. Shri K.D. Sharma, Secretary, Bharat Krishak Samaj who was present on the occasion also addressed the meeting.

Group discussions were held on manures and fertilizers, improved seeds, prices of agricultural commodities, prevention of crop diseases, animal husbandry and social and cultural welfare of the farmers.

Along with the convention the meeting of the Jute Committee of the Bharat Krishak Samaj was also held. The meeting was presided over by Shri Rash Behari Chaudhry and discussed the important problems relating to jute cultivation.

PUNJAB FARMERS ASKED TO INCREASE OUTPUT

An appeal for increasing agricultural output and to make the country self sufficient was made by Shri A.P. Jain, Union Minister for Food & Agriculture and Shri Pratap Singh Kairon, Chief Minister of Punjab at the Punjab Farmers' Convention. The Convention was held at Patiala from February 2 to 4.

Presiding over the opening session of the Convention Shri Pratap Singh Kairon said that Krishak Samaj was a common platform for farmers so that they could organise themselves to protect their social, economic and cultural interests.

The Chief Minister said that the country was facing a critical situation in carrying out the Second Five Year Plan because of foreign exchange difficulties. Crores of rupees were being spent every year for purchasing huge quantities of food grains from foreign countries, he added.

Shri Kairon exhorted the farmers to double their production within the next three years to fulfil the commitments of Punjab for raising food production during the Second Five Year Plan.

Addressing the farmers, Shri A.P. Jain said that there was no lack of resources and with their proper utilization by the farmers, the country was sure to become self-sufficient in food grains in the near future. He said if the present food production was increased by five per cent, India would not have to import food from outside.

Eighty percent of the peasantry in the country, he said, consisted of petty landholders who owned holdings ranging between one to five acres. He advised such peasants to start subsidiary industries like poultry farming, fish rearing etc., and also practise intensive cultivation as was being done in China and other countries.

Shri Jain believed that maladministration was also responsible for the food crisis in the country. Often, means provided for the benefit of the farmers were not utilised at all or were utilised in a half-hearted manner. The Union Food Minister said that during the First Plan period 80 lakh acres of land was provided with irrigation facilities but these were being utilised for only 40 lakh acres of land. He disclosed that