

KRISHAK SAMACHAR

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National Convention of B.K.S. to be held in Bangalore

The 17th National Convention and 30th All India Farmers Council Meeting of Bharat Krishak Samaj is proposed to be held at Bangalore, Karnataka (Dates to be announced later) 6th National Agricultural Fair is also planned with this Convention. All the members of Bharat Krishak Samaj are requested to attend the Convention.

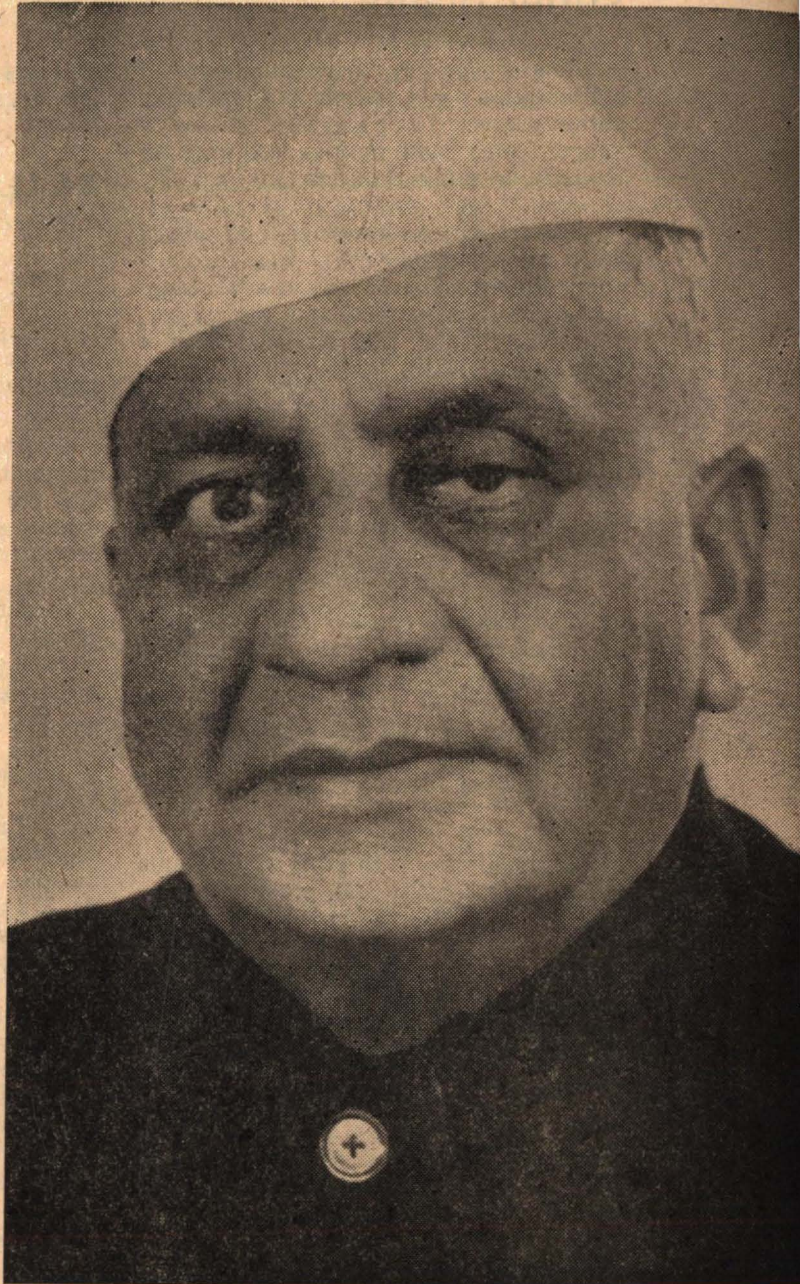
Members who wish to attend the Convention are requested to inform their desire giving full address and Life Membership Number, so that we may sent the Railway Concession Forms etc.

Chairman,
Bharat Krishak Samaj,
Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh
Krishak Bhavan,
A-I, Nizamuddin West,
New Delhi-110013.

Happy New Year

Chairman and Secretary General
of B.K.S. wish a most happy and
prosperous New Year, 1977 to all
its member and readers of Krishak
Samachar.

Dr. D.A. Bholay
Secretary General, B.K.S



We all cherish the memory of
Dr. Panjab Rao S. Deshmukh
on his 78th birthday on 27th December, 1976

New hybrid method to produce super plants

New Delhi. A new method of hybridisation is expected to produce within the next 10 or 15 years laboratory "super plants" with built-in resistance to drought, insects and disease.

The technique—growing food plants from altered single cells—was the chief topic of discussion recently at a Washington symposium on food and agriculture, sponsored by the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF).

"If successful—and we think we will be within a decade or so—we will have an extremely important new tool for coping with world food needs", says Dr. Donald Senich, Director of the research at the Science Foundation.

The method requires the alteration of the plant at the cell level, transmitting new traits by fusing one cell with that of other species or varieties. Cell fusion has recently been accomplished, and plant physiologists can grow whole plants from single cells of tobacco, sugarcane and carrots.

The goal now is to grow whole plants from cells of oats, wheat, potato, barley, rice, and other food crops.

"Once the technology is developed, farmers anywhere in the world will have available plants that have been tailored to grow in their particular environment," Dr. Senich says.

Using the perfected technique, plant geneticists would be able to introduce desirable characteristics such as nitrogen fixation ability, disease and drought resistance or coldhardiness into plants which did not previously possess these characteristics. The technique would speed up the normally slow process of

conventional hybridization, and eliminate the guess-work inherent in open pollination.

Rs. 14,556 m from Export of Food Articles

India earned over Rs. 14,556 million in foreign exchange during 1975-76 by exporting a wide range of food articles, beverages, sugar, fresh and dry fruits, edible oil, spices and marine products.

Exports involving 288 items fetched an amount which was 36 per cent higher than the earning in 1974-75. In terms of value it accounted for 37 per cent of the export trade during 1975-76.

Sugar, tea and fish are the principal export commodities. They yielded a revenue of Rs. 4,749 million, Rs. 2,638 million and Rs. 1,353 million respectively last year.

Edible nuts fetched Rs. 994 million, animal feed Rs. 963 million, spices, Rs. 710 million, coffee Rs. 667 million, vegetable oils Rs. 344 million, oil seeds Rs. 686 million, fruits and vegetables Rs. 318 million, cereals Rs. 192 million, meat Rs. 103 million and guar flour Rs. 109 million.

Live animals, meat, animal casings, dairy products, eggs, fish, cereals, fruits and vegetables, animal feed, beverages, groundnuts and edible oils have large export potentiality.

'Common Front' of Rural Labour Urged

New Delhi. Union Agriculture and Irrigation Minister Jagjivan Ram called for a "common front" of the agricultural

labourer, small farmer, share-cropper and village artisan for "the protection of their rights and for creative participation in the new society that we are building."

Delivering the valedictory address at the International Labour Organisation's Asian Seminar for Rural Workers Organisations, he traced the history of the movement for emancipation of the rural poor and emphasised the need to identify the employer-employee relationship that existed in the agricultural sector against what operated in the industrial sector.

Rural Jobs alone 'Not Enough'

Any kind of organisation of rural labourers, which set them at odds with the owners of the means of production without differentiating between different categories of those owners, was very difficult to succeed. "Indeed, we must take into account a certain degree of identity of interests between agricultural labourer and several types of small employing farmers, who themselves belong to the category of the rural poor and at times work on the field of other farmers."

This identity of interest, the Minister pointed out, had to be thought of not merely in terms of a common fight for rights against those who appeared to be the exploiting classes. That was imperative enough. But in terms of economic activity, the rural poor often came into direct contact with political authorities which in almost all Asian countries had assumed direct responsibility for stimulating economic growth in rural areas. As a result of this, the possibilities of cooperation among the rural poor were extended to direct participation in the developments of the economic infrastructure. This was something that was, perhaps, not yet open to the industrial worker in quite the same sense.

"The scope for organised co-operation among the rural poor, therefore, becomes much wider than that of an organisation of a class in opposition to another class within the economic system."

These crash programmes might appear to be very glamorous, he was afraid they would only end up as relief measures without laying the foundation for sus-

tained improvement in the living standards of the people.

At the other end of the spectrum, he pointed out, were those who constantly lived with rosy visions of total socialisation of means of production in the rural areas as the only solution. "That may be an ideal. But we have to live with current realities and generate social forces within the given situation which may eventually make that goal desirable and possible. It is not so at the moment. The objective, here and now, is to enlarge the base of production by making it possible for the small farmer and the agricultural labourer to contribute fully his creative energies to the development of India and to be assured of his rightful social and economic reward for that contribution."

Banana Crop of West Thana in Danger

Palghar: The Secretary of Palghar Taluka Krishak Samaj Shri Vidyadhar Vedak has reported to the members of Palghar Taluka Patrakar Sangha that the Banana crop at Mahim and Kelwa has been infested with 'Bunchy top' a virus disease which completely destroys the crop.

It was reported that in 1970-71 the Banana Crop in Bassein Taluka was heavily infested with Bunchy top. The Agriculture Department in its intensive drive had to burn the infested Banana plants, which was the only measure to stop further damage. Now only one-fifth of the plantation area exists in this region.

Doubting about the same disease in Mahim Kelwa area the Krishak Samaj of Palghar had requested the Director of Agriculture Maharashtra State to investigate. Hence Shri Dawkar, Plant protection officer for Konkan Division jointly conducted the survey at the places on 19th and 20th November 1976 with Krishak Samaj officials. It is revealed that 35% of infection of the dreaded disease has been located. In a few plantation even 100% infection was noticed.

He advised the farmers to uproot and burn the affected plants as the only control measure. As a preventive measure he advised the application of 'Solvirex' granules at the base and in whorls.

—Ashok Bhole
Palghar

Food Trade's 'back to back' plan

Bombay. A move to relieve the Centre of mounting stock of food grains and to ease the pressure on finance and storage space is afoot. The trade has submitted to the government a scheme known as 'back to back' which can take care of substantial stock lying in the warehouses at various places. The scheme seeks the participation of the traders in the distribution of wheat and to facilitate it the government will have to relax the present curbs on the inter-state movements of wheat. Under the scheme the government will agree to supply wheat to traders at Rs. 140/- a quintal and allow them to sell the same at Rs. 180 on the specific condition that in the ensuing season the traders will return the equal quantity to the government Rs. 105 a quintal. The scheme is expected to serve three-fold purpose. It will relieve the government from the botheration of storing the goods, it will reduce the financial burden of the government and will help stabilise wheat prices in the free market. Although the scheme is not clear about the modus operandi of the traders in respect of purchases of wheat, it is understood that they will purchase wheat from the growers mainly in surplus states like Punjab and Haryana. They appear to be hopeful of obtaining wheat at about Rs. 105 a quintal.

The scheme is also meant for meeting the need of roller flour mills. However, looking to their bad experience of past the traders would prefer that their need be satisfied by the government mainly from imported stocks. The scheme has raised a lot of controversy among the traders themselves, a section of which is not confident about the viability of the scheme. This section feels that it would be extremely difficult to replace the goods at Rs. 105 if the crop in the ensuing season turns out poor. About two years before the traders had given the scheme to the government allowing them to purchase wheat directly from the trade. Under the scheme the traders retained 50 per cent of purchase and surrendered 50 per cent to the government as levy. The scheme proved disastrous as the traders

could give levy worth only two million tonnes of wheat, as against promised quantity of five million tonnes. The scheme had to be discontinued abruptly. However, the risk involved in the new scheme is limited in that it permits the participation in the distribution of existing stocks only. The government has huge stocks of wheat and can afford to consider the scheme. The Government has procured about 6.5 million tonnes besides imports of about six million tonnes of food grains the bulk of which is wheat. The procurement of food grains is such a success that the stocks in the Central pool have piled up to 17 million tonnes. As against this the offtake by the public distribution agencies is steadily falling. The states are no more asking the Centre to release more public distribution. Food grains are ample in the free market meeting the bulk of the need of consumers.

The Myriad Uses of Neemcake

Pune : Neemcake-blended urea can help reduce the use of costly nitrogenous input in crop production and minimise nitrate leaching, so necessary to protect rivers and water tanks from pollution. Sugarcane crop, for example, will cost Rs. 100 to 200 per hectare less, depending on the nitrogen losses in a given price of land, with the use of blended urea. This is the main conclusion drawn in the final technical report of the "utilisation of neem and its by-products" submitted to the Directorate of Non-edible Oils and Soap Industry of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission.

Neemcake is the residue of the fruit of neem tree after the extraction of oil.

The exhaustive monograph is a result of a seven-year research on neemcake as a nitrification inhibitor, prepared by Mr. C.M. Ketkar, who was assigned by the Directorate in May 1969 to execute the project as honorary technical adviser.

Being cheaper and readily available, neemcake, if put into use on a large scale

by agriculturists, will attract a tremendous market demand and facilitate employment to a large number of people in the collection of oil for treating.

The report was stressed the need for extensive utilisation of neemcake-blended urea in paddy and sugarcane crops to prevent huge nitrogen losses. Between 25 and 50 per cent of nitrogen given to these crops is wasted by leaching mainly because of bad water management and excessive rainfall. In India, paddy crop claims 22.5 per cent of the total crop area and utilises 32 per cent fertiliser nitrogen. The use of neemcake-blended urea will cut the consumption of the fertiliser by half and increase its efficacy. Neemcake ensures a slow release of nitrogen, increase the protein content of the paddy grain, and reduces nitrate leaching in the ground water, minimising pollution hazard.

Fertiliser and growth

The revised Fifth Plan has made a provision of Rs. 1,533 crore for additional fertiliser capacity in the Central sector against Rs. 1,093 crore in the draft, reflecting the impact of cost escalation and the determination to push through the scheduled programme for manufacture of this vital input. The demand for fertilisers, though it flagged between 1971 and 1974, nevertheless tended to outstrip domestic production, necessitating annual imports of Rs. 100-200 crore. The import bill spurted, in the wake of the oil crisis, to a staggering Rs. 594 crore in 1974-75. Installed capacity for fertilisers in the country, which at the commencement of 1976 was just over 20 lakh tonnes, is slated to touch 30 lakh tonnes by the end of the year and surge to 47 lakh tonnes by 1978-79, the terminal year of the Fifth Plan. Such rapid expansion of capacity would not, however, result in the matching of production with estimated demand, partly because the new capacity to be established in the last year of the Plan would require time to get stabilised and partly because demand continues to burge on. The production of nitrogenous fertilisers would rise from 11.87 lakh tonnes in 1974-75 to an estimated 29 lakh tonnes

in 1978-79 and of phosphatic fertilisers from 3.31 lakh tonnes to 7.70 lakh tonnes. To meet the projected NPK demand of 48 lakh tonnes in 1978-79, the Fifth Plan has visualised imports of five lakh tonnes of nitrogenous fertilisers, one lakh tonnes of phosphatic fertilisers and 5.3 lakh tonnes of potassic fertilisers.

A near-doubling of fertiliser consumption from the 1974-75 level of 25.91 lakh tonnes is visualised under the Fifth Plan. Even if, as estimated by the Fertiliser Association of India (FAI), consumption falls somewhat short of the target for 1978-79, imports of nitrogenous fertilisers of the order of three lakh tonnes would still be required, in addition to about five lakh tonnes of potassic fertilisers. The import requirement with respect to the latter might conceivably be smaller if the present slack in demand for both P and K continues. The point to note is that the estimated surge in fertiliser demand would have to be promoted. Especially in the context of the current food grains surplus, the incremental demand for fertilisers cannot be taken for granted. That the growth of fertilisers consumption would not be automatic is clear from the fact that the base of dynamic agriculture has remained narrow. In the early seventies, the gross value of cropped output per hectare was above Rs. 1,500 per annum only in 15 per cent of the gross cropped area. This relatively developed part of the rural economy, states the revised Fifth Plan, accounted for 27.84 per cent of the aggregate output and approximately 40 per cent of most of the major inputs such as fertilisers and pumpsets. About 12 per cent of the districts, accounting for about 14 per cent of the gross cropped area, absorbed about 20 per cent of the major inputs. It is these districts which showed a compound annual growth rate of over 5 per cent against 3.94 per cent targeted for the agricultural sector during the Fifth Plan period.

According to FAI, out of 109 districts in the country with assured irrigation or rainfall, 55 districts accounted for the bulk of the fertiliser consumption. It is against this background that the task of fertiliser promotion, highlighted at the

recent FAI-FAO seminar on the strategy for stimulation of fertiliser consumption, gains added significance. Fertiliser producers have decided to intensify their effort in 40 of the 58 districts chosen by the Centre for special effort. The States too have chosen areas for special attention. In approximately 30 per cent of the districts in India, the growth rate of agriculture has been higher than three per cent compound per annum. If the current efforts at special development meaningfully embrace these districts, it is conceivable that their growth rate would be taken up to around 5 per cent. With the spread of irrigation, improved seed supply and multiple cropping practices, it should not be beyond our capacity to stabilise food grains output. Currently, the floor level of output is placed around 105 million tonnes. This would have to be taken up to around 125 million tonnes by the end of the present decade. The compulsions are clear enough. The Fifth Plan has targeted a minimum food grains output of 125 million tonnes for 1978-79 and a maximum of 133 million tonnes. The minimum is the level at which output needs to be stabilised if the estimated demand for food grains at 127 million tonnes in 1978-79 is to be met comfortably out of domestic supplies.

Gurgaon Krishak Samaj Resolution

Gurgaon Krishak Samaj held its executive meeting on 28th November, 1976. It resolved to implement 25-point programme of P.M. & Mr. Sanjaya Gandhi. D.C. Gurgaon was requested to pay bonus to the farmers who sold wheat to Govt. In other resolution they demanded more time from A.I.R. Rural programme. This complained regarding the exaggerated figures of farm production by the All India Radio. This adversely affect their assessment of income.

A.P. Cyclone Damage—224 Crores

Hyderabad : A provisional assessment of loss was estimated at Rs. 224 crore. The cyclone toll has been placed at 159 dead. Chief Minister Vengal Rao said about 1,600 animals had loss their lives costing a loss of Rs. 52 lakh. Over 1.9 lakh dwellings had either collapsed or were severely damaged and the loss on that account was estimated at Rs. 10

crore. Over 1,400 irrigation sources had been damaged and their repair would cost Rs. 5 crore. Repairs to roads, buildings and other public property will cost Rs. 8 crore.

Many Crops Best for Small Farms

Ottawa : Adoption of multiple-cropping is the right answer for small farmers in the developing nations, according to a report by American agronomist Richard Harwood. Despite the low productivity of the multiple cropping, it is better answer involving as it does a low initial investment and hence low financial risk, according to the report carried by the International Development Research Centre.

Besides, "the farmer can be sure that of the dozen species he has sown, some will survive—the economic return is very high". It said : "Agricultural researchers have re-invented multiple cropping, an ancient system that involves sowing different crops at random and harvesting whatever manages to grow."

New Technique for Bumper Fish Yield

Calcutta : Very high yields of fish, ranging from 3,000 to 9,000 kg. per hectare per year in contrast to the inland average of 500 kg per hectare have been achieved experimentally through a technique of intensive pisciculture, according to Dr. V.G. Jhingran, Director of the Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute, Barrackpore near here. Meanwhile, the institute is making strenuous efforts to demonstrate the effectiveness of a high fish yielding technology to help boost the pisciculture in West Bengal and other areas, Dr. Jhingran said. The technique is what is called a composite fish culture, applied in small ponds ranging in area from 0.1 to 0.4 hectares.

FCI Centre for Paddy Purchases

Lucknow : In only two districts of Uttar Pradesh are the paddy prices below the support prices fixed by the Government. These districts are Jalaun and Lakhimpur, where the Food Corporation of India has opened four centres each for

paddy purchases. In all the FCI is running 157 purchase centres in 139 districts of the State.

An official spokesman said that "under the rice levy scheme for 1976-77, commencing on Oct. 1, about 2,90,000 tonnes of rice, including the levy in paddy stocks with the millers, had so far been purchase as against the target of 5.5 lakh tonnes.

For checking hoarding, black marketing and smuggling 378 raids were organised under the various control orders during the fortnight ended on Nov., 30. Seventy-five persons were arrested and commodities worth Rs. 68,928 seized.

Maharashtra Bill to ban Cow Slaughter

Nagpur : Slaughter of cows is to be completely prohibited in Maharashtra keeping in view the Directive Principles embodied in Article 48 of the Indian Constitution. A Bill seeking to prohibit slaughter of cows and to preserve certain other animals suitable for milch, breeding or used for agricultural purposes was introduced by Mr. S.A. Solanke, Minister for Animal Husbandry, in the State Legislative Assembly.

Cart with Foot Brakes

New Delhi : Sumit Sen a 15-year-old student from Calcutta has designed a bullock-cart with foot-brakes, adjustable yoke and a separate drive system that frees the animals from shoulder load. A pair of small wheels and the yoke make-up the drive system. It draws the rear portion consisting of the load and the driver in the fashion of a car, pulling a trailer. The front and rear parts are joined with a ball-bearing arrangement which makes turnings easy. The bearings and the extra pair of wheels in the front part free the animals from vertical load, according to the designer,

M.P. Farmer Wins "Krishi Pandit" Award

Mr. Mangalbai Thakkar, of village Hardua (district Panna). Madhya Pradesh, has won the first prize in the

all-India "crop competition in wheat organised during rabi 1975-76 by the Union department of agriculture. In addition, he will be given a cash prize of Rs. 3,000. Mr. Thakkar recorded a yield per hectare of 13,735.670 kg. and has been adjudged 'Krishi Pandit'.

The Second and third prizes have been awarded to Mr. Bipin Bihari Gupta of village Piparia-Chouda (District Sagar), Madhya Pradesh, and Mr. Ishwarbhai Bacharbhai Patel of village Anandpura, Gujarat. The recorded yields per hectare of 12,078.300 kg. and 11,137,230 kg. respectively. The second prize consists of a cash award of Rs. 1,200 and third prize of Rs. 800/-

U.P. Visit Report

Chairman, B.K.S. Mr. R. Srinivasan and Secretary Dr. D.A. Bholay visited U.P. State Krishak Samaj activities from 22nd to 28th November, 1976. A brief report of that is produced below :—

22-11-1976 : Met Mr. Mohan Lal Verma, Chairman of Uttar Pradesh Krishak Samaj and Members of Hardoi Railway Station. Reached Lucknow at 9-30 A.M. and were received by Dr. Saxena Secretary, U.P. Krishak Samaj. Left Lucknow by Road with Mr. Ram Kishore Tripathi, state Convenor of the implementation of 20-Point Programme by Uttar Pradesh Krishak Samaj and Mr. Ajay Pal Singh, President, Hardoi Dist. Krishak Samaj, Dr. Saxena and other members. Reached Safadabad (Barabanki) where the Chairman opened the Sharma Dan Project for preparation of approach Road to the village by the members of the Samaj and addressed the gathering of farmers.

Addressed Block convenors and members of the Samaj and farmers at Zila Parishad Hill, Barabanki. The Members of the Barabanki Dist. ; Krishak Samaj presented Abinandan Patar to the Chairman. Visited Barono Gram and addressed public gathering were Vadya Vermaji announced enrolment of 12-Life members of the Samaj from the village. The village is in dire need of approach

Road. The Chairman addressed a public gathering of farmers at Mahadeva, Ram Nagar (Barabanki) where the farmers presented Abinandan Patra to the Chairman. Returned to Lucknow at 11-30 P.M.

23-11-1976 : Left Lucknow by Road with Mr. Ram Kishore Tripathi and Dr. Saxena. The Chairman planted a tree at Golai Ganj and addressed the members of the Samaj and farmers. The Chairman was presented Rs. 251/- as a token gesture by the farmers in the area, which was accepted by the Chairman towards Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh Memorial contribution. Addressed the members of the Samaj at Trivedi Ganj. Visited Balwadi at Ranapur (Hydergarh) and talked to the farmers. Addressed the members of the Samaj at Jagdishpur (Sultanpur) Returned Lucknow at 11-00 P.M.

24-11-1976 : The Chairman addressed the District Convenors of 20-Point programme implementation Committee's of the Samaj at Lucknow in the office of the Uttar Pradesh Samaj. Left Lucknow for addressing a public meeting of the farmers at Benthara (Lucknow) in the afternoon. Because unavoidable circumstances the Chairman had to return to Hyderabad. The rest of the programme was to be carried over by the Secretary of the Samaj. Left Lucknow for Baniganj. On the way stopped at Tehsil Headquarter where five life members were enrolled by Shri Mohan Lal Verma.

25-11-1976 : Left Baniganj for Nimi-sharan on way to Hardoi addressed public meeting of the Farmers of Hardoi District Krishak Samaj. After the meeting four life members were enrolled on the spot. The Hardoi District farmers presented Abinandan Patar to Mr. R. Srinivasan, Chairman of the Samaj which was accepted by the secretary on his behalf. The Hardoi District Krishak Samaj announced their programme to enrol more than 750 life members in the District to attain the Second best District Krishak Samaj in the country.

26-11-1976 : Left Hardoi for Kashipur (Nainital). Attended the State Executive

Committee meeting organised on the farm of Sri Bali. The meeting continued untill 12-0 P.M. mid night to be resumed next day morning.

27-11-1976 : The Executive Committee members visited Mr. Bali's Farm and N.S.C. Seed production farm at Hempur. The Executive Committee meeting was continued from 10-00 A.M. to 1-30 P.M. at this juncture Sri Mohan Lal Verma, Chairman of the Uttar Pradesh Krishak Samaj presented a Cheque of Rs. 10,110/- towards the Life membership enrolled during this campaign which was gratefully accepted by the Secretary of the Samaj. Left Kashipur for Nainital.

CSIR to Improve Bullock-Cart

New Delhi : The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research is setting up a multi-disciplinary team of scientists to improve the bullock-cart.

The work done already at the Central Road Research Institute, New Delhi, indicates that it is possible to lessen stress on the animals and reduce damage to roads by improving the design of bullock cart and material used to fabricate it.

According to estimates, there are 13 million bullock-carts in India involving an investment of Rs 3,000 crores providing livelihood to 20 million people. It requires considerable tractive effort with the consequence that there is a great possibility of damage to roads or tracks besides causing stress on the animal.

The "Vagh's wheel" was put forward as an improved solid wheel with sleepers and pads for better contact with the road surface. The Central Road Research Institute, New Delhi, fabricated a special wheel tester for checking on the durability of Vagh's wheel and other alternate designs under rough road conditions. A new floating wheel system, with improved ability to adjust to the changing chamber and developed at CRRI, was also tested. It was found that both the ball bearing and the floating wheel system offer considerable advantage by lessening damage to the road and traction required although their use meant a higher cost.