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Rabi Crop will Ease Food Situation :

JAGJIVAN RAM

Union agriculture minister Jagjivan Ram declared that the food situation would ease further with the harvesting of rabi crop which appeared promising.

Mr. Ram stated that the food prices had already registered a marked decline following timely winter rains in many parts of northern India. His optimism about the bright rabi crop was also based on the comparatively easy supply of fertilisers.

The agriculture minister was speaking at a function at which he presented Krishi Pandit awards to the winners of the all India crop yield competition in 1973-74.

The award for paddy was bagged by Shankar Krishna Power of Talashi village in Ratragiri district of Maharashtra, and for wheat by Mr. Saheblal of Lalwadi in Chhatrapur district of Madhya Pradesh.

Both the winners received a cash award of Rs. 3,000 each, besides a certificate of "Krishi Pandit."

Mr. Power, who selected a plot of well drained medium black soil for the competition and used Jaya paddy seeds produced in his own farm, got an yield of 17,772 kg. of paddy per hectare,

Mr. Saheblal produced 13,999.96 kg. wheat per hectare using seeds obtained from the National Seed Corporation.

The second prize of Rs. 1,200 and a merit certificate for wheat was won by Mr. Bhumanidin Chaurasiya of Panagar village of Chhatarpur district (Madhya Pradesh) and the third prize of Rs. 800 and a merit certificate by Mr. Gajimal Tulsiram Patil of Khondamali village of Dhulia district of Maharashtra.

For paddy, the second prize was won by Maruti Ganapati Patil of Dundge village of Kolhapur district in Maharashtra and the third prize by Mr. Pooranchandra Rao of Mudalpur village of Raichur district Karnataka.

Mr. Jagjivan Ram praised the Indian farmer, who was wise though illiterate. He was confident with the help of agricultural scientists, extension workers and the farmer, who was ready to accept the new agricultural practices the country would be able to achieve self-sufficiency in food. Achievement of self-sufficiency was imparative since food imports would make the country develop a sense of inferiority.

The progressive farmers, particularly in Krishi Pandits, had a role to play in propagation of the new agricultural technology. They had the necessary resources to invest the cultivation of new varieties being evolved by the Krishi Pandits and other progressive farmers would be judged not so much by the individual performance, but the impact they create in their areas by their examples Mr. Jagjivan Ram said.

Farm Panel Report by mid-1975

The National Commission on Agriculture, in the first to be set up in free India in succession to the Royal Commission on Agriculture constituted 42 years back by the erstwhile British rulers, is due to submit its final report by middle of 1975, according to Mr. Nathuram Mirdha, the commission's chairman.

The commission is submitting two interim reports before the end of the February this year. One would deal with marketing organisation for important crops like cotton, jute, tobacco and groundnut, and another would relate to the pricing policy of agricultural commodities. The final report would run in 5000 pages, spread over 17 volumes.

The commission has yet to visit Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat and Kashmir.

The interim reports of the commission concern issues of immediate importance of matters which have a bearing on the formulation of the fifth plan or which are basic to the development of agriculture and are thus of long-term nature.

Among the important features of its interim recommendations the commission has suggested :

— division of responsibility and arrangements for multiplication and distribution of quality of seeds to ensure continued high yields of cereals ;

— integrated approach to research extension and training and division of responsibilities among the ICAR and Central institutes, agricultural universities and state governments and its institutions with a view to creating a sound research base so that science and technology can be more purposeful and gainfully for the development of agriculture :

— multi-directional improvement of the existing irrigation projects for enhancing production by all sections of the farmers including the weaker sections by better utilisation of the resources :

— the creation of an integrated supervised credit structure to provide the entire credit and input needs specially of weaker farmers, agricultural labourers and artisans in their production efforts ;

— modification and enlargement of SFDA/MFAL programmes of the weaker sections of agricultural population and programmes for increasing crop production and for subsidiary occupations to improve their productive potential, increase employment and enhance income :

— milk production and poultry, sheep and pig production primarily through small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers to increase employment and supplement their income ;

— programmes of production forestry in commercial lines to meet the growing demand of newsprint and paper and packages and other woodbased industries and for fuel ;

— a comprehensive programme for integrated development of desert region to mitigate the hardship due to drought, and famine and fair economic and social development of the people.

Farmers Struggle Committee in Khargon, M.P.

Under the Convenorship of Shri Paras Ram Singh Raghuvanshi a farmers struggle committee was organised in Pahari Sangpura & Khargon in two farmers meetings. The committee took decision to fight government for the solution of problems of local farmers.

The following decisions were taken by the committee :—

— Farmers should get 24 hours electricity till February for agricultural production.

- Electric faults appeared should be repaired immediately and no carelessness should be tolerated on the part of electric department.
- Farmers are being ill-treated in procuring levy, some places forces are also being applied. Government should also check this atrocity on farmers.
- The procurement should be realistic.
- The rate of future levy and rate cards should be distributed to farmers by the end of February.

Maharashtra Revises Cotton Payment Mode

The government of Maharashtra has revised the mode of payment for cotton tendered under the cotton monopoly procurement scheme, with retrospective effect from November 17, 1974 during the 1974-75 cotton season.

According to the revised scheme, 80 percent of the guaranteed price is to be paid in two instalments to the cotton tenders as under (A) 30 per cent in cash or by way of crediting the amount in the tender's account in the cooperative bank (B) 50 per cent. to be adjusted towards co-operative bank. (B) 50 per cent to be adjusted towards co-operative loan recoveries in the case of borrower member cotton tenderers. If the recoveries do no amount to 50 per cent of the guaranteed price, after adjustment of the dues, the balance is to be kept in a deposit with the Maharashtra State Co-operative Marketing Federation carrying an interest of 10 percent per annum.

(C) in the case of non-borrowing member cotton tenderers, the entire 50 per cent of the guaranteed price is to be kept as deposit with the marketing federation at 10 per cent interest.

The remaining 20 per cent. of the guaranteed price payable to the cotton tenders after the close of the cotton season will also carry an interest of 10 per cent. till it is paid.

The deposits with the marketing federation are to be repaid before the end of June 1975 or immediately after the close of the cotton season together with the interest accrued thereon to the respective cotton tenders.

Udyan Pandit

Punjab has won the first position in the All Udyan Pandit competition in sweet orange. The distinction goes to Chaudhury Bal Ram Jakhar of Maujgarh village in Ferozepur district. He will get an award of Rs. 5000, a bronze medal and a certificate. Shri Bal Ramji is the Member of Bharat Krishak Samaj.

Mr. Madan Lal Taparia of Badanayagaon village of Bundi district in Rajasthan has been awarded the second price of Rs. 2500 and a certificate.

The competition was organised by the Directorate of Extension of the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation under the scheme of All-India Fruit shows and Udyan Pandit.

Initiated in 1956, the competition is conducted after every two years in mango, apple, banana (desert varieties only), sweet orange, mandarin, grapes, pineapple and guava by rotation.

Potato output up

Production of potato in 1973-74 reached 46.25 lakh tonnes, about 1.75 lakh tonnes more than the previous year, according to latest estimates by the Union ministry of agriculture.

The increase in production is ascribed partly to higher yield and partly to increase of area under potato cultivation. Production was stepped up mainly in states like Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Gujarat. It was, however, offset to some extent by decrease reported by Assam and Himachal Pradesh.

Dairy Mela at Karnal

National Dairy Research Institute is organising Dairy Mela-1975 at Karnal in the Institute as in the past from 5th to 7th March, 1975. This Dairy Mela is very useful to farmers, Dairymen and extension workers who are requested to attend the Mela. Cattle show, Milk competitions and useful discussions are arranged during the Mela.

President of India released Kodesia's book.

New Delhi: The book 'Agricultural Credit in India' written and edited by Mr. Jagdish Kodesia, Secretary, Farmers Coop. Bank of India & W.A.F. Farmers Memorial Trust Society was released on 9th January, 75 by the President of India, Mr. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed.

On this occasion in the Ashoka Hall of Rashtrapati Bhawan, Mr. S. S. N. Mushran, Chairman of the W. A. F. Trust welcomed the President. President spoke on this book and told that such rare and useful material on credit should reach to the remotest farmers in the villages. The function ended with the vote of thanks by Mr. V. V. Patil, trustee of the W. A. F. trust.

Conclusions of FAI-FAO Fertiliser Seminar

New Delhi : A two-day seminar on "optimising agricultural production under limited availability of fertilisers," sponsored by the Fertilisers Association of Indian and the U.N. Food and Agricultural Organisation was opened here by the Union Agriculture and Irrigation Minister, Mr. Jagjivan Ram.

In view of the current fertiliser scarcity and the priorities for food production, the Government's organic manure development and utilisation programmes would also have to be made a "people's programme" enjoying the support and cooperation of all concerned agencies, he said.

He urged the industry to join the Government extension agencies if their fertiliser application programmes, weeding out campaign and the soil testing programmes to educate the farmer on the judicious use of scarce inputs.

Dr. S.K. Mukerjee, Chairman of the FAI, suggested that the Government should set up a fertiliser commission to take charge of long-term and overall fertiliser policy, planning and execution.

Minister of State for Agriculture and Irrigation A.P. Shinde stressed the need for minimising the use of non-renewable resources and increased dependence on bio-matter recycling.

"Whether fertiliser prices rise further or not, the present method of exploitive agriculture, based on a growing consumption of fertilisers, derived from non-renewable resource raw materials, cannot go on for ever for sustaining the growing human population either in this country or anywhere in the world," he added.

According to Dr. S.K. Mukherji, voltage fluctuations and frequent power breakdowns constituted one of the serious problems in operating fertiliser units. A 30 second interruption in power supply would imply loss of production for one to three days, as it took much time to restart the plant. Further, it led to accelerated deterioration of materials in the machine. In the fertiliser units at Kota and Sindri which had captive power

plants, there had not been even a single instance of any trip-up arising from power failure.

76th birthday of Dr. P.S. Deshmukh

Shri Jagjivan Ram lauded the efforts of Dr. Deshmukh

New Delhi : Union Agriculture & Irrigation Minister, Shri Jagjivan Ram, expressed deep regret over the plight of small farmers coming from weaker section of the society. He said that the country's food production cannot go up unless our government and society care for the small and marginal farmers. Every unit of farm count in improving our food situation which is not possible without reaching upto village level and approach the farmers at their door steps. He was speaking on the celebrations of Dr. Deshmukh's 76th birthday.

Earlier, he renamed the Bharat Krishak Samaj building as 'Dr. Deshmukh Krishak Bhawan'. Speaking about Dr. Deshmukh's efforts for organising farmers for first time in the country, he recollected his memories with Dr. Deshmukh when he was running Shivaji Education Society in Amravati and Mr. Ram was Labour Minister. He said that Dr. Deshmukh believed in educating the farmers through various practical methods to bring about Green Revolution in the country. This we felt and recognised at a later stage when we saw with surprise that how intelligent our illiterate farmers are grasping the modern techniques of agriculture more quickly than educated ones.

In his presidential speech, Mr. Anvikar, gave brief introduction about the life and deeds of Dr. Deshmukh. He said that Dr. Deshmukh was very keen on educating farmers and their maids. He told that the plight of farmer cannot improve without educating them not only in schools but by means of demonstrations and exhibitions which make him understand the difficult farm techniques through live models and pictures.

Farmers meet at Nashirabad

Farmers of Nashirabad village of Jalgaon District organised a meeting on 15th January, 1975 which was attended by Dr. D.A. Bholay, Secretary General along with Mr. Y.S. Patil and Mr. Bhagwat Choudhary and Mahajan of Maharashtra Krishak Samaj. Farmers decided to organize Nashirabad Krishak Samaj at village level under the Presidentship of Mr. Yashwant Girdhar Mahajan. During the meeting itself about eleven new members were enrolled. During the discussion on farmers problems following points were stressed :-

In general farmers do not favour Government taking over Monopoly purchase of Cotton or any other agricultural Commodity. However farmers willingly support the Government action of Monopoly Purchase of Cotton if that is in the interest of farmers and generally in the interest of the Nation. If it is worthwhile, other states should also adopt this method for national uniformity. The present practice of Maharashtra Governments made of payment for farmers Cotton is very defective and it has created unrepresented insecurity among farmers. In the first place the cotton prices are very very low while the farm input prices have already doubled. Secondly, the farmers must be paid 80% cash against the value of their Cotton and the balance on final settlement immediately at the end of the cotton season. Those farmers who have to pay any farm credit should be paid 50% cash and 30% should be adjusted against their loans.

Levy rates of Jowar are very low which should be increased to atleast Rs. 100/- per quintal. Prices of fertilizers are increasing while prices of farmers products are not increasing accordingly.

Fertilizer supply should be routed through cooperative societies immediately at the time when needed by farmers for better utilization.

Farmers should be permitted to process their farm products as cottage industries or side supports for example cotton grower should be permitted to run or small unit of Cotton ginning and threads.

Local fund taxes collected from farmers should be used to prepare farm roads along the village borders. Multi taxes levied from farmers should be simplified into the form of land revenue for simple collection.

Agricultural loans advanced to farmers for the last 10 years under one or other schemes are now all of a sudden being recovered by force during this year which is not so good production year. In average with consecutive famine, the recovery of loan should be postponed for next year and recovered in easy instalments ; Horticultural productional loans are all of a sudden being recovered in lumpsum without any fault of farmers which should be recovered over a period as promised in the scheme when started.

Farmers displaced during Land acquisition for factory or irrigation project must be given fair compensation and land in replacement or service to their children in the proposed factory and they must be share the benefits of project for which their land has been acquired.

Farmers met at Dhulia

Bharat Krishak Samaj members and farmers attended meeting at Dhulia on 19.12.74 organised by Mr. M.D. Patil, National Council Member. Farmers discussed their important problems regarding Monopoly Cotton Purchase, Levy, farm input supply and organization of farmers organization. Some of the decisions taken were that Cotton farmers must be paid 80% cash for their Cotton sold to the Government farm credit should be adjusted against 30% of the value from those who are liable ; Farmers under 10 acres should be free from payment of levy ; Levy prices for grains should be higher ; Farm inputs like seeds, fertilizers and insecticides should be made available at appropriate time which needed. Adivasi areas should be electrified and electricity should be easily available for irrigation purposes ; Farmers organization is essential for organised approach to farmers problems and Dhulia District Krishak Samaj should be made more active.

Rajasthan canal to double farm income

Jaipur : Income from land is expected to be doubled as a result of general improvement in agricultural practices and development of other social infrastructure in the Rajasthan canal command area in about four years.

A number of programmes have been initiated to develop this north western desert belt of Rajasthan in a coordinated manner. The work started early 1974 will be completed by 1979-80.

According to World Bank experts, an additional investment of Rs. 15,000 on one "murabba" comprising about 15 acres is justified to bring about a four-fold increase in the net income from Rs. 5,617 per year to Rs. 21,114 per year at the end of the 16th year.

This investment is being made for on the farm services like construction of water-courses and land shaping. The cost of these works is to be borne by the cultivators, who have been assured of institutional finance.

A chain of road works market-complexes, schools, hospitals and provision of electricity are among the amenities being provided by over a dozen agencies whose activities are coordinated by the command area authority. The State Government has accorded priority to the development of this area and made separate allocations in its annual budget also.

Soil conservation

States told to set up land use boards

New Delhi: Following the decision to set up a Central Land Use Commission, the Union Minister of Agricultural and Irrigation, Mr. Jagjivan Ram, has asked the Chief Ministers to appoint State land use boards without any delay.

The function of these Boards will be to make an assesment of the State's land and soil resources and to ensure that these resources are used to the best possible advantage and not allowed to be wasted.

The Agricultural Minister has suggested that the Board should be set up quickly in every State and make a start

on a comprehensive appraisal of the State's land and soil management problems.

It should prepare, as early as possible, a perspective 25 year programme for the optimum management of the State's land and soil resources, so that these may be a rational framework for the yearly and five-yearly plans in this sphere.

The Board should be headed by the Chief Minister and have a whole-time member-Secretary of the rank of a Secretary to the State Government. The State Secretaries for Agriculture, Irrigation, Planning, Forestry, Revenue, Finance, Panchayat, and Country and Town planning should be member of the Board.

Sons of the soil

Mr. M.D. Chaudhary, minister for finance, Maharashtra, stressed the necessity. Employing local men in the desired number in the industries, not only in non-managerial cadre but in the managerial sector also.

This would reduce social tention, he added.

Mr. Chaudhary was inaugurating the 11th annual general meeting of the Thana Manufacturers' Association at Thana.

The minister said that with more facilities for technical training the problem of educated unemployment would be solved. He mentioned that the Planning Commission had approved an expenditure of Rs. 178 lakhs for the training schemes for self-employment and upgrading skill.

Mr. Chaudhary pointed out that the setting up of the Bombay Metropolitan and Regional Development Authority would ensure balanced growth of industries in the area, which was now very crowded.

With regard to the deposit of Rs. 50 per metric tonne asked by the Maharashtra Small Scale Industries Corporation from small scale industries on their demand for iron and steel, the minister stated that the MSSIDC had increased the exemption limits to 60 metric tonne in the SICOM assisted areas and to 25 metric tonne in the other areas. Interest had also been declared on the deposits.



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