

SHRI AJIT PANJA: I was about to reply and there were interruptions in the middle. Sir, so far as the Government is concerned, the 'Ramayan' is definitely secular and we will continue it. (Interruptions)..... We must not mix up our own philosophy with religion and try to criticise. These are the rudimentary things which we learnt even as the first year students of economics..

SHRI ALADI ARUNA alias V. ARUNACHALAM: What about Tirukkural?

SHRI AJIT PANJA: Sir, so far as the other secular subjects as the honourable Member has said, are concerned, they have to apply according to the rules of the Doordarshan and, certainly, this is being thereafter the same would be considered.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA alias V. ARUNACHALAM: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Prof. Lakshman.

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: With regard to these two important items, namely...

MR CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Substitution of tobacco by other crops

*501 SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had recently received any suggestion from the Cancer Research Institute, Bombay, for substitution of tobacco by other crops; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken or propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI G. S. DHILLON): (a) Yes, Sir.

1579 RS—2.

(b) Because of trade demand, good varieties and technologies, tobacco has come to be the most remunerative crop over other crops in all the tobacco growing areas, over a period of time. In view of its recently reported deleterious effects on health, efforts are being made to develop (i) 'Safer Tobacco' having low carcinogenic properties; (ii) develop alternate uses of tobacco for production of pesticides, organic acids and proteins, and (iii) identify alternate crops to replace tobacco.

Removal of control over the prices of Vanaspati

*505. SHRIMATI KRISHNA KAUL: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to remove control over the prices of Vanaspati;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to ensure that Vanaspati is available to consumers at fair prices?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT): (a) to (c) There is no control over the prices of vanaspati. However, after discussions with the Government vanaspati manufacturers have voluntarily agreed for a price discipline by keeping the maximum price of a 15 kg. tin of vanaspati at Rs. 335 (local taxes extra) This voluntary price control is continuing.

2. Some other important steps taken by the Government to ensure the availability of vanaspati at fair prices are:

(i) Effective supply management of imported oil keeping in view the availability and prices of indigenous oils to vanaspati industry.