

Scrapping of Agricultural Prices Commission

374. SHRI ABDUL REHMAN
SHEIKH: SHRI
RAMESHWAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be please,} to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Third Indian Agriculture Congress had, in a resolution, urged the Government to scrap the Agricultural Prices Commission and to set up a different machinery for the fixation of prices of agricultural commodities to remove the discontentment among the farmers over the un-remunerative price fixed by Agricultural Prices Commission; and

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRIES OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) Government is aware that the Third Indian Agriculture Congress had, in a resolution, urged that the Government of India should scrap the Agricultural Prices Commission and devise an entirely different machinery for the fixation of agricultural prices.

(b) The Government are of the view that scrapping of Agricultural Prices Commission and setting up an alternative machinery is not necessary. The real demand of the farmers is that Government should fix prices of agricultural commodities at remunerative levels Government is fully alive to this demand and in the formulation of price policy for various commodities this requirement is constantly kept in view.

Introduction of comprehensive public distribution system.

375. PROF. SOURENDRA BHAT-
TACHARJEE; SHRIMATI
HAMIDA HABIBULLAH:

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce any scheme of comprehensive public distribution system to supply essential commodities to people throughout the country;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) if answer to part (a) above be in the negative, what are the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRIES OF AGRICULTURE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI MOHAMMED USMAN ARIF): (a) to (c) A comprehensive public distribution system is already functioning in the country. Presently, there are about 2.98 lakh fair price shops for the distribution of essential commodities such as wheat, rice, sugar, imported edible oils and kerosene oil. The States have the option to add other essential commodities for distribution by arranging for their procurement. Thus a number of States are also distributing pulses, vanaspati, cycle tyres and tubes, torch cells, soaps (toilet and laundry) etc. through these retail outlets. The State Governments, which are responsible for the organisation and the administration of the system within their respective territories, have been requested for taking appropriate steps to strengthen and enlarge the functioning of the system. Under the New 20-point programme, more fair-price shops would be opened, including mobile shops in far-flung areas and shops to cater to industrial workers, students' hostels etc.

Felling of trees by the officials of the Horticulture and Food Technology

376. SHRI SHRIDHAR WASUDEO
DHABE; SHRI NARASINGHA
PRASAD NANDA: Will the Minister
of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state: