

(d) No irregularity has been reported by the State implementing agency in the implementation of AEZs scheme.

(e) Does not arise.

Formation of cartels by tobacco traders

2818. SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the tobacco sales are not picking up in the State of Andhra Pradesh during this crop season;

(b) whether it is also a fact that tobacco traders have formed a cartel for not allowing competition;

(c) whether it is also a fact that so far only 11 million kilos was sold from the auction platform; and

(d) if so, the action taken by the Tobacco Board and the Ministry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) As on 21.4.2012, a quantity of 22.62 Million kg of VFC tobacco has been marketed on Tobacco Board's platforms as compared to 13.72 Million kg as on 22.4.2011 during last season.

(d) Does not arise.

Cess and penalties collected from tobacco farmers in AP and Karnataka

2819. SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) how much penalties and cess have been collected from tobacco growers from the States of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, since 2000;

(b) whether this money was spent on welfare activities for the tobacco growers;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a) Sir, an amount of Rs. 264.28 crore has been collected as penalty from tobacco growers since 2000-01 upto February, 2012. During the same period, an amount of 2.81 crore has been collected as cess.