

**Bringing onion under MSP regime**

552. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently prices of onion in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and other parts of the country nosedived between one to two rupee per kilo forcing the onion growers to throw their crop on roads or distribute free of cost to people, whereas onion was being sold more than twenty rupee a kilo in National Capital and other parts of the country, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether Government proposes to bring onion under MSP regime and compulsory market intervention in case of bumper crop, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) The Minimum wholesale price of onion was ₹ 100-200/qtls. in few markets in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and other parts of the country. However, the average modal wholesale price of onion during April-July, 2016 ranged from ₹ 650-900/qtls. in Maharashtra, ₹ 300-670/-qtls. in Madhya Pradesh, ₹ 772-1058/qtls. in Uttar Pradesh, ₹ 423-906/qtls. in Rajasthan and ₹ 389-785/qtls. in Gujarat depending on quality of produce. The average retail price of onion during the same period ranged from ₹ 20.67-22.90/kg in Delhi, ₹ 14.76-19.50/kg. in Mumbai, ₹ 16.00-19.37/kg. in Kolkata and ₹ 14.96-17.22/kg in Chennai.

(b) No, Sir. The Government is already implementing the Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for procurement of perishable commodities to protect the growers of these commodities from making distress sale in the event of a bumper crop during the peak arrival period when the prices tend to fall below economic levels and cost of production. Under the scheme, in accordance with MIS guidelines, a pre-determined quantity at the fixed Market Intervention Price (MIP) is procured by the agencies designated by the State Government for a fixed period or till the prices are stabilized above the Market Intervention Price (MIP) whichever is earlier. The area of operation is restricted to the concerned State only. Recently, DAC and FW forwarded the request to various onion producing States including Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh to send the proposal for procurement of onion under MIS. However, no proposal has been received from these State Governments so far.

**Establishing regional office of Coconut Development Board in Maharashtra**

553. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any regional office of the Coconut Development Board is presently functioning in coastal Maharashtra to promote production of coconuts in the State, if not, the reasons therefor; and

(b) whether Government proposes to establish a regional office of Coconut Development Board in Maharashtra, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) No, Sir. However, the State Centre Office of Coconut Development Board (CDB) at Thane, is looking after various developmental activities of CDB in Maharashtra.

Besides, a Demonstration cum Seed Production Farm (DSP Farm) has also been established at Dapoli Village, Satpati, District Palghar in Maharashtra.

Regional Office of CDB for Western region is located at Bangalore.

(b) No such proposal is under the consideration of the Government.

#### **Steps to make barren land fertile**

†554. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken note of the report of Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE), according to which 105.49 million hectare land of the country has turned barren and 25 per cent area has turned into desert;

(b) whether this turning of barren land is impacting Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab the most;

(c) if so, the reasons for the land turning into barren;

(d) whether Government is taking steps to make the barren land fertile and check the further turning of land into barren, if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) have not conducted study to assess the barren and desert land in the country. However, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) conducts survey from time to time for assessing the extent of soil erosion and land degradation. As per available estimates (ICAR-2010), out of a total geographical area of 328.73 million ha. about 120.40 million ha. (37%) is subjected to various kinds of land degradation which includes 94.87 million ha. of area affected by water and wind erosion in the country.

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.