

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The main reasons for low procurement are estimated lower production resulting in less market arrivals, higher level of open market prices than the support prices fixed by the Government, brisk purchases made by the traders of consuming States, and withholding of stocks by the producers in expectation of further rise in prices.

(c) and (d). Wheat procurement is still continuing and possibility of some of the stocks lying in open in the mandis cannot be ruled out. Instructions have, however, been issued to remove the procured stocks to food storage depots within 48 hours of its purchase. Adequate steps to cover the stocks with tarpaulins/polythene covers and other measures to avoid damage are taken on regular basis.

(e) Under the Buffer-stocking policy the Government have adequate stock of foodgrains and the shortfall in wheat procurement is expected to be met out of these stocks.

Free and compulsory education upto age of 14 years

87. SHRI GULAM RASOOL
KOCHAK:

SHRI M. V. CHANDRA-
SHEKHARA MURTHY:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that pro-

vision of free and compulsory education to children upto the age of 14 as envisaged in the Directive Principles of the Constitution is still far from achievement;

(b) if so, whether the Fourth Educational Survey has pointed out that not even 20 per cent has been achieved by Government in this regard so far;

(c) if so, what are the main reasons for this slow progress; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to see that this is achieved during the Sixth Five Year Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND):

(a) to (c). Yes, Sir, it is fact that the Constitutional goal of free and compulsory education is still far from achievement. But it is not correct that not even 20 per cent enrolment has been achieved. The position of enrolment at the elementary stage (classes I—VIII), according to IVth All India Educational Survey, is as given in the attached Statement.

(d) The Sixth Five Year Plan 1980—85 is still under formulation. Appropriate measures will be taken to increase enrolment and reduce drop-outs. It will be too early to indicate the nature and extent of the measures.

