

people at the tank filling points, drivers-cum-distributors and the booth licences; and

(b) if so, what effective measures are proposed to be taken to check this racket?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN):** (a) There is no racket in the sale of Mother Dairy Milk.

(b) Does not arise.

**Policy Re. Procurement Price of Agricultural Produce**

946. **SHRI C. CHINNASWAMY:** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the present policy of Government in regard to the minimum and maximum price of procurement of agricultural produce especially rice;

(b) whether Government are aware of the hardships of agriculturists caused by the offer of a very low price for procurement;

(c) the ranges of prices offered during the last twelve months; and

(d) whether Government propose to enhance the price so as to ensure economic viability of agricultural operations?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN):** (a) At present the Government fixes procurement prices in respect of rice, wheat and coarse cereals and marketing support is provided at these prices. In respect of cotton, jute, oilseeds (groundnut, soyabean, sunflower seed and rapeseed and mustard), pulses (gram, arhar, urad and moong) and barley, Government fixes minimum support prices. In the case of sugarcane, the Government fixes statutory minimum prices payable by sugar mills. The main objectives of the Government's agricultural price policy

are (a) to ensure remunerative prices to the farmers so as to provide sufficient incentive for adopting improved technology for increasing production (b) to safeguard the interests of the consumers, particularly the vulnerable sections of the population against excessive rise in prices and (c) to avoid excessive intra-seasonal, inter-seasonal and inter-regional disparities in prices.

(b) The procurement/support prices have been fixed by the Government after taking into consideration the recommendations of the Agricultural Prices Commission, views of the State Governments and framers' organisations etc. These prices are reasonable and, by and large, have received a favourable response from the growers.

(c) The procurement/minimum support prices are announced for each marketing season and are valid for one year

(d) The Government do not envisage any changes in the procurement/minimum support price which have been announced for the current marketing season. For some of the commodities, prices are yet to be announced

**Aid from I.D.A. for Strengthening Research on State Agricultural Universities**

947. **SHRI C. CHINNASWAMY:** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a project has been formulated by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research for strengthening the regional research capability of State Agricultural Universities with assistance of International Development Association;

(b) if so, the details thereof?

(c) whether Tamil Nadu Agricultural University has been included in this project; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?