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Title: Need to set up additional auction platforms for marketing tobacco in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

SHRI M. RAJA MOHAN REDDY (NARASARAOPET): The F.C.V. tobacco crop size had gone up from 85 million Kgs. in 1985 to 150 million Kgs. in 2004 in Andhra Pradesh and from 15 million Kgs. in 1984 to 90 million Kgs. in 2004 in Karnataka. The number of auction platforms operated were 21 in Andhra Pradesh and eight in Karnataka during 1985, and 20 in Andhra Pradesh and nine in Karnataka in 2004. As per the Government's estimate, the ideal crop size that can be handled per auction platforms is 4.5 to 5.5 million Kgs. So, the number of auction platforms that should have been operated during 2004 are 30 in Andhra Pradesh and 18 in Karnataka. Tobacco is a perishable product and has to be marketed by the farmers within 90 to 100 days of its production, otherwise it gets deteriorated in quality and loss of weight. It is observed that problem faced by Tobacco Board in establishing additional auction platforms is shortage of staff.

I, therefore, urge upon the Central Government to take immediate necessary steps for establishment of another 10 and 9 additional auction platforms for Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka respectively alongwith sanction of staff component to Tobacco Board.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri G. Karunakaran Reddy – Not present

Shri Ganesh Singh – Not present

Shri Shishupal N. Patle – Not present

Shri Sukdeo Paswan – Not present