

[Shri V. S. Krishna Iyer]

Delhi also. Members here have complained of price-rise in vegetables but the increase in prices of vegetables does not go to the actual producer. I know it is not the responsibility of the Centre alone. But the State Governments have failed to protect this section. It is a hard-hit section. If the growers refuse to cultivate and if you do not give them support price what will be the fate of our country? I am sure an assurance will come from the Government that they will take earnest measures and that the growers of all the commodities which are mentioned here today, and particularly, cotton, paddy, coconut and also mulberry in Karnataka will get a minimum support price. We have got various Boards and Corporations. The main idea of constituting such Boards is to help the growers. But here the growers are neglected and only those who are engaged in the manufacture of finished products are given remunerative prices. This should not happen.

With these words I fully support that there should be remunerative price for all the agricultural products.

17.23 hrs.

## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I want to know from the Members. The discussion on the subject will take, I think, a long time and it may go even after 6 O'clock. According to the list of speakers before me, I think it may go upto 10 O'clock. Why I am telling is that members should note the time factor and they should be brief and the Minister can reply to-day himself. Otherwise it will go to some other day.

SHRI V. KISHORE CHANDRA S. DEO (Parvathipuram) : On a point of clarification, Sir. Normally the political parties are given time according to their strength. Independents come finally. Now

I find you have departed from that normal practice. How can you call an independent Member before you call the recognised party. This is the first time you are beginning this practice. This practice was not followed earlier.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The same pattern is followed. If you want you can give in writing.

SHRI V. KISHORE CHANDRA S. DEO : Same pattern is not followed.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You please go through the records and verify.

SHRI V. KISHORE CHANDRA S. DEO : Independent members are never called before a party member. I protest and I will also give it in writing.

[Translation]

SHRI KALI PRASAD PANDEY (Gopalganj) : Just now while raising a point of order, an hon. Member made a reference about independent Members. There are many Parties which have only one Member in the House, whereas the number of independent Members is 4. Discussion on sick industries had taken place in this House previously also. I and Shri Datta Samant have been in queue since yesterday but we have not so far been given time...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : There is no point of order.

SHRI V. KISHORE CHANDRA S. DEO : Sir, it is a question of precedents and conventions. You are deviating from established conventions. If these are not established conventions, then why you call Telugu Desam first and like that.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : If you find there is any deviation you please give in writing.

[Translation]

SHRI KALI PRASAD PANDEY :

Whenever we ask time to speak, we are told that our name is at the tail end. We have been in queue since yesterday.

17.26 hrs.

**DISCUSSION RE : CRASH IN PRICES  
OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES  
CONTD.**

[*English*]

**SHRI DIGVIJAYA SINGH (Rajgarh) :**

Sir, today we are seeing a strange phenomenon operating in the markets of this country where the agricultural produce prices are going down but the retail and whole-scale prices are going up. It is a strange phenomenon but it has been an age old practice in this country that whenever the agricultural produce comes in the market the prices fall and when the farmer has sold his produce the prices rise.

Looking into this background we are grateful to the late Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi when she created the Agricultural Prices Commission in 1966 and later on when it was felt that the agricultural costs and prices should be looked into our Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, has given it a thought and converted it in Agricultural Costs and Prices Commission.

The subject under discussion is quite different. As far as the prices of agricultural produce are concerned I have got a lot to say but I will confine my speech to the actual implementation of the agricultural prices fixed by the Commission. It is unfortunate that till now although we are fixing minimum support price of a number of agricultural produce yet we have not been able to develop an effective procurement agency throughout the country which can look after and implement the prices which are declared by the APC. The agricultural commodities are being sold below the minimum support price whether it is rice, soyabean or jowar in North India or coconut and other things in South India. This requires very close looking into by the Agriculture Ministry. We owe a res-

ponsibility to the farmers and we have to ensure that whatever minimum support price has been fixed by the government the farmers should get that price. It is the responsibility of both the Central and State governments.

Sir, I also feel that procurement is being confined to bigger 'mandis' where the farmers are bringing their produce. In tribal areas most of the agricultural produce is sold in weekly markets where the procurement agencies are not functioning and, therefore, the persons who are benefiting from the minimum support price are not the farmers. It is the middlemen, whom we call 'kenchias', who are going to the weekly markets and purchase paddy from the farmers at a lower price. Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister to ensure that in the weekly markets the prices of agricultural commodities are monitored so that the actual farmer gets the benefit of the minimum price operation.

Sir, at the same time the actual implementation takes a very long time. Provision of funds, provision of gunny bags, weighing machines, all these things take a very long time. Although the State Government takes a decision to start procurement the basic facilities are not available at the market place and because of non-availability of these facilities the prices of the agricultural commodities fall and the Government is not able to procure agricultural commodities effectively. Therefore, to ensure proper price to the farmers the Government has to take advance action, at least two months ahead so that the funds are available for the provision of gunny bags, weighing machines, etc. at the market places to facilities procurement. A very detailed micro-planning has to be done at the lower level so that the farmers get remunerative price.

Sir, it has been the experience—I was the Agriculture Minister in the State of Madhya Pradesh for some time—that State like Madhya Pradesh is already short of funds for the developmental activities and the resource needed for procurement drive has to be provided by the Government of India. This would help the State Government to come into this kind of operation