

beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend Representation of the People Act, 1951.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Representation of the People Act, 1951."

*The motion was adopted.*

SHRI MOHAN SINGH: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

15.56 hrs.

#### PATNA UNIVERSITY BILL

[English]

SHRI RAMASHRAY PRASAD SINGH (Jahanabad): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to establish and incorporate a teaching and residential University in the State of Bihar and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to establish and incorporate a teaching and residential University in the State of Bihar and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto."

*The motion was adopted.*

SHRI RAMASHRAY PRASAD SINGH: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

15.57 hrs.

#### Fixation Authority Bill

#### GOVERNMENT OF UNION TERRITORY OF ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS BILL \*

[English]

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA (Bankura): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the creation of Legislative Assembly for the Union territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

I will also like to inform the House that Clause 19 of the Bill which was to be printed in thich type has not been so printed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the creation of a Legislative Assembly for the Union territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto."

*The motion was adopted.*

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

15.58 hrs.

#### AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE PRICES FIXATION AUTHORITY BILL\*

By Shri Bhagwan Shankar Rawat

[English]

Mr. Chairman: Now we shall take up discussion on item number 18. The time allotted for this discussion is two hours.

Shri Bhagawan Shankar Rawat to speak.

[Translation]

SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT  
(Agra): I beg to move that:

"The Bill to provide for the establishment of an authority for the fixation of minimum remunerative prices of all the agriculture-produce and for matters connected therewith, be taken into consideration."

Sir, the agricultural produce prices fixation authority Bill has been moved in the House for the establishment of an authority for providing remunerative prices and making provision on the matters connected therewith.

As per the existing practice of industrial products are fixed by industrialists themselves. They do it arbitrarily. Prices of cement, steel and other such consumer items have increased 5 to 6 times during the last one decade whereas the prices of agriculture-produces have increased only by two times.

Now, when a consideration on Dunkel proposals was going on and when a review of industrial production was undertaken during the last session, it was found that even after a huge investment of lakhs and crores of rupees, our country has not been

able to attain a sufficient industrial growth, nor have we been able to increase our exports properly. After 45 years of independence the Government have realised to read here to the policy of increasing agricultural produces. They arrived at the conclusion that our export can be increased only by increasing agricultural-produces and that is the only way to improve our economy. A lot is said about green-revolution. Farmers of the country took a vow that would not let any child sleep hungry whatever be their number and whatever be the increase in population, even if the Government failed to control the population-growth despite investing millions of rupees for this purpose.

16.00 hrs.

[PROF. RITA VERMA *in the Chair*]

Farmers resolved that they would provide food to the growing population and that nobody will die of hunger. When the political initiative failed to have a check on population-growth farmers of the country accepted this challenge and subsequently the result of green revolution has not only made India self-sufficient food-grains but also our country is in a position to export food grains to some extent. However, we have to be careful of the fact that stagnation starts beyond a particular limit and that is exactly the situation now prevails in the country in food grain production. I would like to present some data which forms the part of an answer given in Rajya Sabha by the hon. Minister in response to unstarred question No. 1079. He has accepted that the production of food grain during 1990-91 was 1,76,390 tonnes. The production fell to 1,68,373 million tonnes during 1991-92. The production of food grains during 1992-93 was one lakh eight thousand million tonnes.

[Sh Bhagwan Shankar Rawat]

It is matter of great sorrow that the production of foodgrains is further falling down during 1993-94. According to an estimate of the Government, the production of foodgrains will be around 179 million tonnes.

This is much less than the target of 188 million tonnes set for the Five Year plan for 1993-94. This is starting particularly because the economy of the country depends on how the rise in production of foodgrains and subsequently its export commensurate with the growth in population of the country. The present figure in this regard is starting. Production of foodgrains is associated with the dignity of the country as also with the issue of achieving self-sufficiency. The Government of Japan provides three times more price for paddy to their farmers than the price prevalent in the international market. This is because, the people of Japan know that if their country is not self-sufficient in foodgrains then any advanced Country may usurp their sovereignty. The Government of India is, however, not at all conscious in this regard.

Sir, I would like to remind that my hon friend from the Congress party, the former Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi used to say even our present colleagues says that they are more concerned about the problems of the new century that is to come after this 20th century is over, when we will enter the new century, our country will require 228 million tonnes of foodgrains. The Government has not chalked any positive plan to fulfil that requirement. No plan of the Government will help increase the production of foodgrains if our farmers do not get remunerative prices. Speeches delivered by leaders will not help in increasing the production of foodgrains, it will increase only

when farmers are provided with support price. Moreover, production of foodgrains cannot be raised by holding seminars by experts, it can be done only through imparting right kind of technique for farmers and by providing them help. They should be guided properly and provided agricultural facilities. Our Government has already accepted the Dunkel draft. Our hon Minister will be signing the draft in the month of April.

Sir, I have read the interview of the hon Minister in "Jagran" where in he has said that the Government was helpless and we have to sign the agreement. So, in view of all this, it is necessary that farmers should get fair price for their produce only then they can be encouraged to increase the foodgrains production. That is why there was a need to bring such a Bill so that farmers could get fair price of their produces.

Mr Chairman, Sir, agricultural Price Policy was decided in long term prospectus. Had the hon Minister of Agriculture been present here I would have said to him that there has been no changes in the policy which required a major changes. The same old procedure, the same bureaucratic approach is in vogue which is causing harm to farmers. Thereafter, the Commission for Agriculture costs and prices submitted a report which revealed that prices of agricultural produces are fixed on the basis of last four years data. (*Interruptions*)

A Committee was formed under the Chairmanship of Prof S S John. Later on with the changes of Government there was also a change in the chairmanship of that Committee. At present the Committee is functioning under the Chairmanship of Shri D S Tyagi. The Committee presented its recommendations on 28.9.93. I would like to submit as to what the Committee felt about it.

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[English]

"A high powered Committee consisting of representatives of the Planning Commission, Ministry of Finance, Department of Food, Department of Civil Supplies and Department of Agriculture, in co-operation, be constituted to examine the recommendations made by the Agriculture Commission in its report on prices policy submitted to the Government during the last three years as summarised below."

I would like to say again that this Government is perplexed on the Dunkel draft. Indian Government is bent ruining the farmers. The Committee further recommends that:

[English]

"Government should reduce its commitment of foodgrains distribution in a systematic manner and after three years or so only a limited proportion of the population which is really poor should remain covered by the public distribution system."

[Translation]

The Prime Minister and the spokesman of the Government of India say that they do not propose to destroy or change the Public Distribution System but through the recommendations of the Committee such situation is being created indirectly. It is Conspiracy on the part of the Government to follow the instructions Dunkel through the Committee Report. Thus poor people will be made to suffer. In this context I would also like to say that the administered prices of

commodities distributed through Public Distribution System have also been increased under this conspiracy and thus the poor people are suffering. Further the Committee recommends:

[English]

"Distribution through Public Distribution System in anti-poverty programmes and other programmes where the grains are more likely to gravitate in favour of poor be systematically analysed."

[Translation]

When people revolts the Government bows down before them. But Government will never bow down before the poor. Further the Committee recommends -

[English]

"The rate of subsidy should be brought down drastically, but not in a single go and the reduction be spread over a period of three to four years."

[Translation]

In other words, subsidy should not be removed drastically but gradually. It has recommended to do away with subsidy within a period of 3-4 years.

[English]

"There is a need to recognise the symbolic relationship between the procurement and distribution of foodgrains under which open market sales of foodgrains should be made integral part of the food policy."



[Sh. Bhagwan Shankar Rawat]

[Translation]

He has rightly said that coordination should be maintained between the procurement and selling prices. According to statistics made available by the Government procurement price for the year 1992-93 was Rs 330. On 12/94 the selling price in public distribution system was Rs 402 and later it was raised. It was a huge difference. It is really improper because after procuring the foodgrains from farmers, it distributed to consumers through PDS. In these way the Government says that it works for the welfare of poor. Consumer fight vigorously in the open market. The Government of India has constituted CACP and it is of the view that there is a need to monitor as well as to inquire into the prices recommended by APC. I agree on this point that the need of this Bill was on this ground. But I am against constituting a high powered Committee consisting of bureaucrats only. Instead a commission consisting of the representatives of all the section of society including people who have knowledge in the field of agriculture, who could take comprehensive views of all the sections should be appointed. The appointments in this proposed commission should be made by the Central Government. It should consist of one person from the field of agriculture and one representative from each State Government and Union territory, one representative from Chemical and Fertilizer Ministry and four representatives from the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. We all talk about the welfare of agricultural labourers, but do not seek their participation. The Railway Minister was talking about the interest of employees, so, I would like the Minister of Agriculture also to take care of the interest of labourers for which this Bill has been introduced. In the said commission on the Central Govern-

ment should nominate its four representatives and four Members from the Lok Sabha and two Members from the Rajya Sabha, who could raise the voice of people. These MPs should be elected by Members of Parliament itself. According to the latest report of the Government the criteria on which the prices of agricultural commodities are regularised is defective. They consider the marketability, its economic impact on the market and several other things. But these have no direct link with the farmers. Before announcing the remunerative prices for agricultural commodities the proposed authority would keep in mind the average capital investment by farmers, average expenditure on labour, expenditure on crop insurance, the interest paid on loans taken for agricultural purposes, expenditure on maintenance of farms, rebate of subsidy given by Government on agricultural produces, current prices of agricultural crops in the open market, climatic conditions, natural calamities like flood, drought, hailstorm, untimely rain etc., average monthly domestic expenditure of farmers which includes expenditure on education, health and housing, all these factors should be considered before announcing or fixing the remunerative prices of agricultural produces. Remunerative prices should be announced before the sowing season so that the farmer could make up his mind and plan for sowing crops. Alongwith that the release price of foodgrains to be sold in retail should also be fixed by this authority every year. Apart from this, authority will work in cooperation with the central agencies and other institutions working for procurement, supply and distribution of agricultural crops. In this manner the farmer would get remunerative price for his produces. The Government also wishes to constitute a high power Committee against this commission but it should be a comprehensive Committee consisting of not only officers

The current procurement price of the Government is 60 per cent of the International market price Under the concept of globalization we determine the prices of industrial production by considering and coordinating their prices in the international market which is against the interests of consumers Now the protection for industries is also being done away with You do not want to protect the industries then why the prices of agricultural produce is 60 per cent as compared to the prices of the international market What is the fault of the farmer? Why should not he prosper under the policy of this globalisation There is no open international market for export of agricultural produces especially foodgrains I have no hesitation to say and statistics also prove that India has to pay more on import of foodgrains while it gets less on export of foodgrains The development of agricultural production is linked with its prices and I would also like to enlighten the points as to how it can be developed With the help of State Governments a uniform agricultural policy should be formulated for the whole country, so that an identical situation could be created This uniform policy will help the proposed authority in determining the prices of agricultural produces for all the farmers

The matter of consolidation of holdings is also linked with it Some State Governments have undertaken consolidation of holdings but others have not And where it had been implemented a lot of bungling in land consolidation has taken place There should be a uniform policy Irrigation arrangements should be as per the announced schedule All facilities like quality of soil, improved seeds, rural link roads, services of experts in agricultural field, availability of loans from Governmental Institutions should be ensured After creating such an identical situation, the proposed authority will be able to determine the uniform prices of agricul-

tural produces

The Government treats all equally Farms having irrigated land or unirrigated land for improved quality of seeds or traditional seeds, farms having approach roads or not having so are treated equally The farms, where these facilities are not available the farmers will have to work hard and where these facilities are available farmers have to work less It should be taken into consideration

It is necessary for the Government to formulate uniform agricultural policy for the development of this sector By a comprehensive policy, proper marketing of agricultural produces can be done But till this system is not implemented the prices of agricultural produces should be determined as per the zonal arrangement in accordance with the available facilities

I would also like to point out that the Government spends very little money on agricultural research Dr Manmohan Singh's policies may be correct but these are being proved disastrous for the farmers Research in determining the prices of agricultural produces has been stopped under the pressure from IMF and World Bank The Government grants very little amount for it I would like to say that unless proper arrangements for R and D and proper allocation of funds are made The agriculture sector cannot produce and alongwith that it is necessary to increase the research work

The figures given for institutional loan are startling During 1989-90, loan amounting to Rs 2576 crore was taken and in 1990-91 only Rs 230 crore was granted to farmers as loan. It proves that Government is ignoring the agriculture sector which is very distressing

[Sh Bhagwan Shankar Rawat]

I would also like to say something from the consumers viewpoint There are 20 to 25 per cent big farmers in the country who are able to produce more than their requirement and go in surplus Thus there are 14 crore families in the state country which have surplus production, whereas 78 crore people have to purchase foodgrains for their requirement In addition to it small and marginal farmers, rural labourers and agricultural labourers are not able to have adequate foodgrains as per their needs These people have to purchase foodgrains from outside for 9 months in a year, it is, therefore, essential to define the procurement price and the support price, so that we may be able to provide adequate relief to the small farmers and improve the country's economy As a result of it, the prices would be remunerative and the farmers would definitely be encouraged to apply their full strength in the field of agriculture

I would like to mention something about CAPC It had fixed the procurement price @ Rs 250 per quintal but the State Governments urged that the farmers of their States are agitating over this price so it should be raised I would like to say that the Government fixes the prices while sitting in Air conditioned rooms because the figures provided by the Government are alarming This is an exercise only on papers, because the prices fixed are not actually remunerative, so the commission increased the prices by Rs 30/-per quintal to console the farmers After that in 1992-93, the procurement price was suggested for Rs 285/-per quintal But when the attention of A P C was drawn to the fact that the Government had withdrawn the subsidy being given to the farmers, the A P C refixed the price at Rs 305/-per quintal and it was done under pressure I would like to point out in this regard that while fixing

the procurement price, the prices of fertilizers, insecticides, seeds and land should be kept in mind properly and all these things should adequately be analysed You will be surprised to know that in 1989-90, when the procurement price was fixed at Rs 185/- per quintal The consumers had to pay Rs 42/- more in January and February, Similarly, in 1990-91, when the price was fixed at Rs 215/- the consumers had to pay Rs 120/- more in the open market Similar was the case in 1991-92 The rate was fixed at Rs 225/- per quintal but the consumers had to pay Rs 203/- more in the market, I would, therefore, like to stress that the authorities working in this field, must keep the interest of the consumers in mind apart from the producers That is why it is necessary to keep a proper coordination among all these factors and for making a coordination among all the things, it is not proper to create an atmosphere of suspicion and fear about the Dunkel proposal I would like to urge the Government to make proper arrangements to ensure remunerative prices to the farmers for their produces and the subsidy which is being withdrawn should be restored so that the farmers interest are not overlooked and the economy of the country does not collapse In order to achieve all these targets the Government should constitute a Commission which should look after the interests of the farmers as well as the consumers if there is any need to give subsidy to the farmers it should be given A research should be conducted in his agricultural land so that improved seeds could be sown in it Besides, there should be a coordination between the International market prices and the local prices in Indian market so that the Indian farmers could prosper It will improve Indian economy As has been said that there will be no effect of Dunkel proposal on subsidy and it will be continued at the rate of 10% so it should be continued and should not be totally withdrawn Alongwith the sub-

sidy. The loan system also may be made effective so that the farmers could get loans as per their requirement. As I have stated about the alarming figures, we should not fly in the air because we would need 228 million tonne of foodgrains by the year 2000 and the same target is not being achieved by us. Centrally, the Minister and the bureaucrats make misleading statements in the newspapers and these statements are very unrealistic. That is why, we have to take this factor into account. In the President's Address and also in the resolution adopted yesterday itself in the Parliament, we have expressed our will power that at any cost we will have to face any sort of disturbances created by Pakistan, but unless we are able to achieve self sufficiency in foodgrains, we would not be in a position to face a war with any other country. If we want to protect the unity and integrity of our country, we will have to give a serious thought to this problem. In this connection, I would like to congratulate the people of Punjab that while facing the problems of terrorism, they did not allow the production of foodgrains to fall and continued to maintain the same rate of production every year. They did not lose this battle too. Despite all this, the Government of India has totally failed on this front because the figures for the last three years are revealing the facts. I would like to state that when such a huge conspiracy is being hatched to dismantle in Kashmir, not only Pakistan but other countries also, are involved in this conspiracy in North Eastern States, also, the secessionist forces are posing a threat to our existence and integrity. We should be more careful in meeting such problems. In Bombay, genocide was caused and bomb explosions carried and to destroy our economy. Bomb explosions were made in Calcutta too. An attempt was made to terrorise the workers by throwing bombs at them in Madras and some where such type of attempts were

made through RDX.

Terrorist forces want to enslave this country again. This is only their ultimate aim. India cannot make the required progress in the field of Industrial production. These forces are now after our agricultural production which is the only point of our aspirations. These forces will definitely ill advice the Government of India to damage the agricultural production of our country and that is also being done through the Dunkel proposals so that our agricultural production does no increase. But I would like to say again that the Government of India must review all its policies and ponder over this fact that whatever money we had incurred for the industrial development of our country; alas if we would have incurred a half of this amount on agricultural development, on making irrigation system effective in this country, it would have been much fruitful for the country. If we would have accepted the suggestions made by Dr K.L Rao, the then Irrigation Minister that a girdle (Kardhau) Canal should be constructed by linking Ganga and Kaveri if we would have constructed that Canal, that would have acted as an ancilliary in providing happiness to the country and it would have proved really a girdle on the waist of 'Bharat Mata'. The Canal would have brought such a green revolution in the country as the whole India from Kashmir to Kanya Kumari and from Atuck to cuttack and Assam would have turned into a granary and we would have been able not only to fulfil our requirements of foodgrains but also of the entire world.

I, therefore, would like to say that this factor is linked with the economy of the country. So there is a need to set up such a scientific system for fixing the procurement price of agricultural produces as may be able to safeguard the interest of the farmers as well as consumers and may also be

[Sh. Bhagwan Shankar Rawat]

helpful in improving the country's economy and India may turn into granary. Remunerative prices can be fixed only when there is adequate production of foodgrains in the country. For this purpose, we will have to set up a rural economic system and frame such an Agricultural Policy which suits our country. With these words, I move this Bill in the House for adoption.

[English]

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI (Deogarh) I thank Shri Bhagwan Shankar Rawat for having brought this Bill before the house, which provides an opportunity to discuss an important subject like the Agricultural prices. In his speech he has dealt at length with the entire gamut of his party's manifesto. I entirely agree with the conclusion arrived at by him, for example there should be a scientific basis for fixation of prices of agricultural produce. As you know agriculture is the mainstay of our economy. We are predominantly an agricultural country. Farmers are the backbone of our economy; we are indebted to the farming community for having made Green Revolution a success.

In 1951, India entered the age of Five Year Plan. What was our production when the first Five Year Plan was launched? It was about 55 million tonnes and now it is 300 per cent more. If we say that we have not achieved anything or we see the ghost of Dunkel in every thing, it is not useful.

We have a Commission on Agricultural Cost and Prices. Rawatji has proposed that it should be replaced by an authority.

Remunerative prices should be ensured to our farmers. Sir, the support price is fixed

by the Government. The Government does not say that there should not be any transaction in the market at the prices higher than that. But there cannot be any transaction in the market at the prices less than that. If somebody does that, he will be punished. So, it should be made clear. Despite this, we come across distress sale of our agricultural produce in the interior areas. That has got to be arrested.

Madam, for the first time since independence, there has been an enhancement in support prices of agricultural produce during the last two years. In the last two years, the increase was about 50 per cent. Dr. Jakhar did not agree. The Government rejected the recommendations of the Agricultural Prices Commission. They pay over and above whatever is recommended. That is why, there was also criticism from some quarters. There were editorials in prominent newspapers that the Government is trying to woo the farming community. Without trying to tilt in any one's favour, the Government is trying to balance the producers and the consumers which is a rather delicate exercise. We have producers as also poor consumers. So, I would also say that the Commission should be more broad-based. Some representatives should be included in the Commission. I do not know how the measures suggested by Mr. Rawat will improve all these things. He suggested that there should be a council-like authority wherein representatives from all the States and Union Territories should be included. It should also include other representatives viz. the Members of Parliament and other officers. If it is accepted, it will be like a small Assembly of the North-Eastern States. Then, again, you will have to go in for small committees. My suggestion is why not this Commission be strengthened. If necessary they can move around, ask some knowledgeable people to give their evidence before the

Committee Let them give their suggestions as to whether it is a practicable proposition or not You see Section 11 of Mr Rawat's Bill Of course, there should be a declaration in the beginning of the sowing season I agree with the policy of the Government, Sometimes, there may be delays People should know before the sowing season about the prices of agricultural commodities which they are going to produce Naturally, if somebody is aggrieved, he will come before the Government of India and appeal

I agree with the spirit of this Bill that there should not be any exploitation There should be remunerative prices for all these things Anyway, we have a machinery which should be strengthened

Even I tried to persuade myself but I cannot agree to the contents of this Bill Imagine the position At the same time, I would say that even if some good farmers, rich farmers are not inclined, and not inclined, are not interested to go in for agriculture, they even try for a Class III job If you ask them about it they say, there is no sense of dignity to do agriculture It is a question which all of us should address ourselves It is a question of dignity

While fixing up the prices on a scientific basis we should anticipate the standards of an agricultural family, that should also be borne in mind Even a Class IV employee of the Government of India or for that matter of the State Government is drawing about Rs 2000 per month Rs 24000 per annum He does not spend anything out of it, But how many agricultural families in our country are getting a net income of that level, of that order from agriculture? The percentage will be 3 or 4 or 5 This is after meeting all the expenditure on agricultural operations This is the net income that he gets How many agricultural families are getting about Rs

20,000 per annum ? This is how have also to make this comparison

The population is increasing at the rate of 2.2 per cent every year This is a challenging situation created for us we have to feed so many mouths, a big number is added every year, but the land remaining is the same The answer to the question is to raise the productivity of the land and to arrest the growth of population How can we increase the land productivity? The land reforms are there, they mean consolidation, etc At the same time, we have to popularise the high yielding variety There has to be irrigation on a priority basis Every inch of land should be irrigated, should be capable of producing more than two crops Then there is a question of fertilizer, etc There are so many things associated with this Then there is a question of crop insurance scheme With these provisions also, there is an element of risk in agriculture, the element of risk is very much there in this profession The crop insurance scheme is being implemented on the modest scale Whatever pitfalls are there, loopholes are they, they have got to be plugged, and we have to ensure the successful implementation of the crop insurance scheme Regarding procurement, whenever there was a question of issue price if the other price went up the procurement price also went up, the support price also went up, it has resulted in increase of issue price Then the deficit balance gets very much tilted, to a certain extent the subsidy support can be given, it is being given

Due to expansion and extension of the PDS, even if there is an increase, the total amount payable by the Government by way of the subsidy is increasing So, you cannot question the motive of the Government they are always out to help you, they are sincere to help the poor peasants

[Sh Shriballav Panigrahi]

*That way again loan and other facilities are there. So when we advance loan to a cultivator that should be on liberal terms and conditions*

There are loan waiver schemes but I do not want to enter into that dispute. It has complicated the matter. Many farmers, I know, were ready to pay but they were told by their bankers not to pay at that time because of change in policy. So they are neither here nor there. They could not get the benefit again. The interest rate has also gone up for on fault of theirs. At least the interest portion should be waived. There should be a provision for repayment of such loan by easy instalments. Like that we have to revolutionise our agriculture. Productivity of land has got to be increased. The prices have to be remunerative. By remunerative price I mean to say should be something in surplus with the farmers. The farmer, besides meeting the expenditure of his family, has to invest for the improvement of his land etc. also. Every year some amount is required for that purpose.

In our country the system is such that if anybody who gets a job of even a peon gets so many other benefits like leave, medical facilities, education for his children in central schools, etc. But what happens to the farming community? They should also get reimbursement of medical expenditure of free medical facilities, education for their children, etc.

We have to create a situation in our society so that the farmers should not feel neglected that because they are, not Government employees so they should be deprived of the basic facilities.

I do not like to speak more but we have

*a lot of sympathy for the farming community because ours is basically an agricultural country. Unless we improve agriculture and fulfil the task that is ahead of us, i.e. checking the increasing population and correspondingly increasing the productivity also. If there is no growth in production then the type of situation that will be ahead of us or that we will be facing will be very serious. This is clear to all of us. That is to be done fully by a resolution.*

I again say that I agree with the conclusion of the speech made by the hon. Member, But what he has said in between and the provisions of a council that he has made is not going to serve any purpose. We can improve the conditions a bit with the help of this Commission but there should be some improvement and that should be strengthened. At the same time the procedure, that we have, should be improved upon scientifically so that there is no exploitation of farmers, and remunerative and prices are declared well in time. Again more important than that is to ensure payment of prices to farmers all over the country. In the last I would say that we should aim at creating such a situation in the country. Thank you.

[*Translation*]

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria) Mr Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Motion moved by Shri Bhagwan Shanker Rawat. My hon. friend Shri Panigrahi feels that the Motion seeks to bypass the Agricultural Prices Commission and set up an autonomous body which will not accept the recommendations of the APC. However, the Motion seeks setting up of a separate commission and it should be welcomed by all. The present Agricultural Prices Commission fixes the remunerative prices, support prices and policies on the basis of the figures of input costs plus margin. We have experienced



that the prices fixed by the commission are further deteriorating the condition of the farmers. Until the agriculture produce is made remunerative and the people engaged in agriculture are employed on full time basis the situation is not going to improve.

Unfortunately at present MPs are farmers too. Teachers, traders, businessmen and people engaged in other professions are also engaged in agriculture. They purchase farms to improve their social and economic status. These are not the full time farmers. It is only a trend of fashion, a side job for them. It is mainly because agriculture is made a full time occupation, the country cannot develop. Agriculture can become a full time occupation only if it is made profitable.

I agree with Shri Panigarhi's views that during the last one to two years the Government of India has drastically revised the prices of the agricultural produces. However, he highlighted only one view point and forgot to comment on the increase in investment. Last year, I made a submission that fertiliser input costs constitute 30 per cent of the total investment in agriculture and during the last two to three years the Government of India has increased the fertiliser prices by 55 to 65 per cent. As a fallout of this increase in fertiliser prices, last year the consumption of phosphatic fertilisers was reduced by 40 per cent. Figures of the current year are not yet available.

Since the announcement of the industrial policy, between 1991 and 1992 and subsequent increase in fertiliser prices the consumption of DAP and MOP has come down by 40 to 45 per cent. The main reason for it was that the farmers could not afford to buy fertilisers at such high prices. Wages increased and the prices of the pesticides

have also increased by 200 per cent during the last two years. I would like to submit that during the last two years the prices of insecticides increased by more than 200 per cent. The Government of India is not in a position to do anything in this regard. The Hon. Prime Minister yesterday agreed in the House that DAP and MOP will have to be imported because basic raw materials for these are not available in the country. Further, the Hon. Prime Minister stated that as far as cases of other fertilisers like Urea are concerned, 'more or less' the country has become or is soon going to become self-sufficient in this field. At that time I did not consider it appropriate to challenge his assertions but now I would like to contradict the statements made by the Hon. Prime Minister. For the last two to three years at least 12 urea manufacturing units of FCI are lying closed in the country. Now you will have to import urea. Gradually, as per the projections of Government of India, imported fertilizers will be cheaper than the indigenous chemical fertilizers. For the sake of it this argument is being given that imported fertilisers will be made available at cheaper rates. This is being said because indigenous fertilizers are costing more and the country is in a position to import fertilisers.

What will happen in future? The manner in which all barriers have been removed under GATT, a time will come when foreign companies will keep the prices of urea fixed and under control resulting in closing down of all fertiliser units in India when there will be no production, foreign companies will have their monopoly and they will arbitrarily fix the prices of fertilisers... (*Interruptions*) Last year while delivering his speech on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address he had accepted in that at present India has become the largest sugar producer in the world. Sugar production was 1.30 crore lakh tonnes in the country. But



[Sh Mohan Singh]

what happened this year, sugar production declined by 20 lakh tonnes due to chaotic situation last year and non timely payment to the sugarcane growers. Sugarcane growers have to struggle and firing was opened to them when they carried on huge agitations. As a result of it sugarcane growers did not invest in production of sugarcane and its production declined. This year situation has come to such a pass that if Government will not import sugar to the extent of 20 lakh tonnes or more it is not possible to meet the demand of people within the stock available in the country.

Sir, within a year the prices of onion have increased by 124 per cent and gram prices by 65 per cent. Similarly, potato prices also increased by 54 to 55 per cent. Whenever prices shoot up and farmers get remunerative prices then next year the farmers divert totally towards these items and there is glut in the market. As a result of it the farmers will have to resort to distress sale of their produce.

As a result there is no concept of planned agriculture in this country. In the absence of a coordinated support price agriculture is not being done in a planned manner. Because of it, if one year there is good price for sugarcane he produces it more in the next year, but you do not pay attention towards this fact. The next year wheat crop is affected and you have to import wheat. In order to remove all these anomalies, it is required to set up a permanent high power Commission, which should include representatives of consumers and fix the price considering the capacity of the consumers. The representatives of farmers should also be included in it and while fixing the price it should take into account the money required for his daily requirement to maintain

his simple living standard while fixing the price, apart from the cost it should also take into consideration the requirement of farmers. Therefore, representative of farmers should also be included in this set up. Besides agriculturists specialists should also be there to prepare data regarding investment in agriculture who can also prepare concrete practical and scientific basis of the cost. With that representative of the Union Government should also be there. This way these four types of representatives collectively will be able to fix a right price.

From this point of view, the suggestion made by Shri Rawat is very appropriate and I fully support it.

[English]

SHRI UDDHAB BARMAN (Barpeta)  
Madam, Chairperson I thank Shri Rawat for giving us an opportunity to discuss a very important subject affecting not only the agricultural population but also the entire economy of the country.

The peasantry of our country is producing. But, even then our country is not self-sufficient in foodgrains. Why?

17.00 hrs.

There are different sections of our rural population. There are agricultural labourers who are very poor. They are devoting their productive energy as agricultural labourers, doing work for others. There are peasants who are very poor. The agricultural labourers and poor peasants constitute about seventy percent of the entire rural population. Though they participate in the production, they have very little surplus to sell in the market, except their labour power. Then, there are some rich and middle-class peasants who constitute about twenty percent of our rural

population and who have something to sell in the market. There are also big land holders. Though they do not physically participate in the production but they have a large amount of surplus to sell in the market. So, the rich peasants, the middle-class peasants the agricultural labourers and the poor peasants contribute a lot in agricultural production. But what we find is that there is a great difference between the prices of agricultural products and the industrial products. The peasants produce and sell their products in the market at a very low price, a distress sale also whereas the industrial goods made from that stuff are sold to the peasants at a very high price. Naturally, this has to be balanced.

I completely agree with my colleague Shri Mohan Singh that the prices of agricultural inputs are increasing every day. The prices of fertilisers are increasing, the electricity charges are increasing, the prices of pesticides are increasing, the charges for irrigation water and everything else are also increasing. So while determining the price of agricultural products, all these factors should be taken into account so that the actual price of these agricultural inputs is to the presents. The peasants are devoting their energy to the production of different kinds of agricultural products. Some are engaged in the production of sugarcane, some are producing tobacco, some are producing cotton, some are producing vegetables. But there is no control on the prices of these commodities. Sometimes the prices crash and the suffer like anything.

They had lose everything. There is even news that in certain places, when the prices of the production crash, the peasants had no other way to repay the loans taken from the banks and *Mahajans* and had to commit suicide, These things have been going on. Our peasantry is not getting the

fair price of their produce. I can cite many examples. In our North East of India, in West Bengal, in Orissa and in Assam, jute is being produced. The producer or the farmer producing jute is not getting the actual price. There is the Government agency, the Jute corporation of India. The production is exceedingly high. But when they go to the market. There is no agency to procure their produce and they have to sell the material like anything at throwaway price and by this the peasants suffer. To necessarily safeguard the interests of the peasantry, the agency of the Government should be very much active so that the peasantry is not discouraged.

Again, all sorts of restrictions are there. I feel that to boost the agriculture in our country, the Government should come with a definite policy. It is said that the green revolution created a lot of things, But what is the present position? Now it is said that the growth rate in the particular areas where green revolution was stated, these is a decline. It is there in the Government's reports.

In some places, where land distribution is being done, the growth rate is increasing. Particularly it is so in West Bengal compared to other States. So what I think is that along with certain measures to give remunerative prices to the agriculturists and farmers, there should also be steps taken so the the land distribution throughout the country is done properly because for the development of our industry. Our culture, the upliftment of our rural population-particularly peasantry it is very important.

By giving remunerative prices to the peasantry, alongwith measures to have land distribution throughout the country and alongwith safeguarding the interests of the agricultural labour, a certain situation can

[Sh. Uddhab Barman]

be created which will help only improved production of agricultural produce but also development of our society.

With these few words thank you for allowing me to participate in the discussion.

SHRI CHITTA BASU (Barasat):  
Madam, I am quite thankful to my esteemed friend, Shri Bhagwan Shankar Rawat for the initiative he has taken for bringing forward this Bill.

Without going into the details, I want to put across the view that the purpose of the Bill enjoys support from all sections of the House.

17.09 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

I have with the report presented by Shri J. Chokka Rao. I am very glad that Shri Chokka Rao has submitted to this House this report which has amply substantiated the basic idea underlying this Bill.

Sir, the peasantry of our country is subjected to various vagaries.

Apart from the vagaries of the nature, I would mention one more vagary, particularly the fluctuation in the prices of commodities. This Committee has given enough statistics to say that there are wide fluctuations varying from 0.1 to 13.8 during a year and in the manufactured products it varies from 8.7 to 11.1 and for all the commodities it varies from 7.3 to 13. In the case of primary articles, it is all the more disquieting and all the more disappointing. It varies from 2.1 to 16.6 and the primary articles are

generally produced by the peasants of our country. Therefore, this wide fluctuation of the prices of agricultural produce constitute one of the very important vagaries of the peasants' miseries.

Sir, I quote from this report. It says:

"The high prices of major inputs have been the source of special concern. The decontrol of the fertilizer has caused a hike in the wholesale price index of fertilizers by 34 per cent. The tariff rates for electricity used for irrigation have gone up by 22 per cent. The prices of high speed diesel oil have also moved up by 21 per cent and that of light diesel oil by 27 per cent. Also witnessed is a steep hike in the prices of lubricants which have gone up by 25 per cent. Likewise, the prices of other manufactured articles like food products, tobacco and tobacco products, textiles, rubber and plastic products, tractors, bicycles, etc., have also exhibited uptrends."

Now, the misery of the peasants is mainly due to this increase in the prices of agricultural inputs and there is no commensurate increase in the prices of the agricultural produce. In this connection, I would like to refer to "Term of Trade". A Task Force has been constituted with Mr. Kahlon as the Chairman who was a former Chairman of the C.A.C.P. and I do not know whether there has been any report submitted by him on this "Term of Trade", as yet. So far as my knowledge goes, there has been no depend figure on the "Term of Trade" between agriculture and industry. Right from the middle of 1970s, upto 1990s, the "Term of Trade" has been unfavourable for agriculture. I

think we all understand this and because of this and, the farming has not been become a profitable profession for the majority of the people of our country. The "Term of Trade" only means, the ratio between the price received and the price paid by the peasants. It represents overall rate of exchange between agriculture and non-agricultural sector. It generally reflects the trends in income and the relative purchasing power of the farming sector. This enables us to ascertain the economic health of agriculture and for assessing the demand potentialities of our farmers.

Unless there is true index of the TOT, we cannot really prescribe for the prosperous health of agriculture of our country. Through this discussion, I want the Government should undertake the responsibility of bringing up the actual TOT, term of trade, between industry and agriculture. That will be very much helpful for us to understand at what position the agriculture of the country is at present.

I am glad that the report has been made ample contribution for substantiating the urgency and the continued necessity of subsidy in agriculture whereas the Government is determined to reduce subsidy and ultimately remove subsidy. A study by Gulati, in *Economic and Political Weekly*, made in 1989 reveals that these subsidies from about 15% of the value of the agriculture produce in our country. It might have been further reduced because of the reduction of subsidies during the last three or four years. The net result measured through producers Subsidy Equivalent (PSE) is that the Indian farmers are taxed to the tune of 2.33% rather than subsidised. As a matter of fact, agriculture is not being subsidised but agriculture is being taxed. In contrast, the farmers are highly subsidised in developed countries by as much as 72.5% in Japan, 37% in

European Community countries. 26.2% in U.S.A., 33.5% in Canada and 10.3% in Australia. These details of the agriculture subsidies in developed countries are provided in the report. Our subsidy quantity does not exceed 15% As matter of fact, it is further reduced to 10% when other countries subsidise up to the extent of 72.5%, we are going to reduce it. I think, we cannot bring any improvement in agriculture, if the Government policy regarding subsidy is not reversed.

I strongly make a plea that the subsidy question should be discussed in details and see agriculture is properly subsidised, not to raise the question of reducing it, not to raise the question of removing it, not to raise the question of eliminating it.

In 1990, U.S. farmers got 47 million dollars as Government subsidy and additional benefit of 28 million dollars by way of consumers having to pay higher prices, by signing the GATT, by signing the Dunkel proposal, we have agreed to reduce our subsidy. You have agreed to eliminate subsidy after 10 years. Naturally, this will bring about ruin of the agriculture of our country In the direction of reviewing agricultural policy of the country, the fixation of remunerative price for the agriculture produces must occupy the centre of stage. If that is not done, the poverty of the peasants of this country will continue to increase. If agriculture is destroyed, industry also cannot survive. One point, I want about import and export policy.

Under the Dunkel proposal, we will be forced to import between three to four per cent of foodgrains from outside even if we are surplus in our food production. On an average, Indian food production is about one million tonnes.

[Sh Chitta Basu]

Three per cent of it means 30 lakh or 40 lakh tonnes. Why we should be required to import food if we have got enough for our own country? if we are forced to import food from outside, how the price can be established and how the remunerative price to farmer can be secured?

Therefore, I appeal to the Government to make a reappraisal of the policy and take certain steps which really provide for the remunerative price of the agricultural produce of our country. CACP as it prevalent today does not meet the requirement and in order to substitute the CACP, a suggestion has come which is a very good suggestion, according to me, to have another Authority to fix the remunerative price for the agricultural commodities in our country bearing in mind the vagaries, the economic factors and other political factors because of the GATT proposal because of the Dunkel proposal and fix up the price of the agricultural commodities to make our country self-sufficient, prosperous and to make our country's independence further stable and further strengthened.

MR SPEAKER Mr Sobhanadreeswara Rao, you should confine to timing because there are others to participate.

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE (Vijayawada) Thank you for giving me the opportunity. First of all, I congratulate the mover of this Resolution Shri Bhagwan Shankar Rawat, a good friend of mine for moving this Bill in this House. By moving this agriculture Produce Prices Fixation Authority Bill, he had given an opportunity to this House to discuss a very important issue.

As you are well aware, this is such an important issue with which nearly 70 per cent of the population is directly connected and even the rest of the 30 per cent is also indirectly connected as consumers.

The fact of matter is the farmer are having a different perception. As you and my friend Shri Chauhan are aware, every one knows that the farmers are not satisfied. The farmers feel that the minimum support prices announced by the Government are not remunerative and the Government says, "No. We are taking care of everything. We are calculating very scientifically and we are announcing the prices depending upon the recommendations of the CACP. Many a time, whenever prices are raised, the press which is in the hands of the capitalists, in order to see that the farmer is done, though not full, but to some extent, some justice, makes all harsh comments, saying "Oh! The Government is simply wanting to have the sympathy of farmers for the sake of votes only."

They do not agree that farmers are being subjected to injustice. Surprisingly, the consumer feels that he is over-burdened. And many a time, you may be aware, consumers in this capital city are very fortunate as compared to the poor people in Bihar, Rajasthan or several other States where they are not getting even 700 grams per capita whereas in this capital city, most of them are getting ten kilograms. This is a very important matter which is giving scope to different people to think differently was the Agricultural Prices Commission which has been re-named into Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices. It is there. What necessitated my friend Shri Rawat to bring forward this Private Members' Bill is the most important point which I want to highlight in this CACP, the Government

says in the Agricultural Price Policy - A long Term Perspective', published by the Government of India, Ministry of Agriculture, as follows:

"The Commission takes into account not only a comprehensive overview of the entire structure of the economy of a particular commodity but also a number of important factors as indicated hereunder:

Cost of production, changes in input prices; input output price parity; trends in market prices; demand and supply; inter crop price parity; effect on industrial cost structure; effect on general price level; effect on cost of living; international market price situation and parity between prices paid and prices received."

I would like to say that this is only an eye wash. It is there only on paper. But it is never being implemented in letter and spirit. Many of these items which I have read out, are contradictory in respect of several other industrial products which have got a lot of bearing on population. So many factors are never taken into consideration it is the manufacturer, it is the producer who determines the price of his product whereas in the cases of farmers, it is the Government that fixed the prices. I would like to say that in this the cost of production varies from region to region; varies from farmer to farmer; varies from irrigated area to non-irrigated area; varies from area to area. It is not uniform.

Regarding element of risk, it is not at all taken into consideration we know, many a time, especially the people of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Orissa, West Bengal and coastal areas, we are frequently subject

to cyclone tidal waves and several other States are subjected to drought. This element is not being taken into consideration. Many a time the figures upon which this CACP recommends to the Government are the figures which have been arrived at on the basis of two year old, three year old and sometimes four year old figures. On that they work out some percentage and recommend to the Government about the computation of cost.

Regarding the fertilizer support, they take the average of prices used by the farmers. Some where a progressive farmer who is having irrigation facilities, he uses maximum fertilizers and in the case of dry land farmer, he uses less fertilizer. But they take the average. My suggestion is this CACP ought to have taken into consideration an optimum dose of fertilizers, the NPK that have been recommended by the Government, by our ICAR. What should be the maximum optimum quantity of fertiliser which gives the maximum yield and which ultimately will lead to the maximum production ? That is never taken care of.

In regard to irrigation cost also, through the canal irrigation, we pay hardly Rs. 40 per crop, like paddy in Andhra Pradesh, it is Rs.40 to Rs.50 whereas through the tubewells, he has to spend nearly Rs.500 to Rs.1000 because the tariff of agricultural electricity varies from State to State. My humble submission is, all these are not scientifically taken into consideration

Long long time back, if I remember aright, the CACP recommended Rs.2 as transport charges per quintal for sugarcane. That has not been implemented ever after seven or eight years, leave alone the escalation in the transport cost. Only sugarcane growers of Maharashtra are fortunate enough because there the sugar coopera-

[Sh Sobhanadreeswara Rao]

tives are being handled by the farmer's representatives and the farmers' families are bearing the transport cost and harvest cost whereas farmers in other areas are not so lucky

Regarding profit margin, I would like to say one thing. As you are aware, these fertilizer manufacturers are given post-tax of 12 per cent on net profit and to fulfil that condition, to fulfill that obligation, the Government is giving fertilizer subsidy

And now, the Government is about to agree on ENRON proposal with the Maharashtra State Electricity Board, where a post-tax profit of 16 per cent is being assured to those foreign investors. The Government is going to allow 16 per cent net return on the capital investment as well as on the working capital. They have already enhanced the capital costs, they are going to get a lot of money but that is a different matter.

What I mean to say is that when they are assuring so much of return to the Indian fertiliser manufacturer and to the foreign investor, does this CACP not have any idea or commitment to give, at least, one per cent profit to the farmers?

I was a Member of Bhanu Pratap Singh Committee on Agricultural Policies and Programmes. At one point of time, this Committee had written to the CACP and it wanted to know whether CACP was allowing certain percentage or margin of profit to the farmers. The CACP had replied to that I will just read out the contents for your kind information.

"Thank you for your DO letter dated 30th March, 1990, which was

placed before the Committee. Besides the information which you have supplied, the Committee wished to know whether the margin of profit over the cost of cultivation is a fixed percentage. If yes, what is the percentage, if not, why not? How does the CACP simultaneously take into consideration the different parity concepts, intra-commodity prices parity, intra-sectoral prices parity, input-output prices parity and parity between prices received and prices paid by the farmers? Have these been synthesized into a composite parity index? If yes, how?"

The Committee had asked such questions. In reply to that, it was said

"Please refer to your letter dated so and so. The margin of profit over the cost of cultivation is not a fixed percentage.

There is no fixed mathematical model on the basis of which the Commission arrives at the level of prices."

It has categorically denied that the CACP has got any formula or any commitment to allow some percentage or margin of profit to the farmers. This is what I want to bring to your kind notice and fortunately, Sir, some slight improvement has taken place when Shri Hanumantha Rao Committee was asked to examine some aspects and there upon the recommendations were sent to the Standing Advisory Committee headed by Shri Sharad Joshi, in which, fortunately I was also a Member. On two points the Committee made some recommendations.

They are giving to the industry some

managerial cost. So why not to the farmer? Therefore, it was suggested that they should allow some managerial cost, that is, 10 per cent of total paid out costs. That was accepted by the Government. Another suggestion was made regarding the statutory minimum wages to the agricultural labourers. They suggested that either statutory minimum wages or the actual wages paid, whichever is higher, should be taken into consideration and a maximum pressure should be put on the State Government to implement the statutory minimum wages to the agricultural labourers.

Sir, I would like to humbly submit to you that in respect of these two conditions, the terms of trade were deliberately kept against the farmer. The Government's intention was always to see that the agriculture sector is not so profitable is not so remunerative and whatever the farmer gets, it should be sent to the industrial sector in the form of shares or some other investment. And the Government has never bothered about the capital formation in the agricultural, sector.

I would like to tell you about the answer given in this House on the investment made in the agricultural sector. The investment, in the year 1988-89, from the private sector was of the order of Rs. 2,985 crore and from the public sector, it was of the order of Rs. 1,680 crore. The total investment, in the year 1988-89, comes to Rs. 4,665 crore. In the year 1991-92, the private investments slightly improved; they were of the order of Rs. 3,500 crore, whereas the public investment, that is, the investment made by the Government in the Agricultural sector creating the infrastructural facilities had decreased to Rs. 1,360 crore. This is how the Government is neglecting the agricultural sector and in that, if you remember, Sir, the international price situation also must be taken into consideration.

Shri A.V. Ganesan, the former Commerce Secretary, recently, wrote a few articles in *The Hindu* paper. Of course his view point is that we should accept the Dunkel Draft. That is a different matter. This is not an occasion to discuss it in detail. Earlier we have done it and we are going to do it again. But what I want to bring to your kind notice is that Mr. Ganeshan has accepted in his article that on paddy and wheat, on two crops alone, the Indian farmer has been deprived of nearly Rs. 16000 crore, which otherwise he would have got if international prices are taken into consideration. That is, the farmers were not given subsidy. They were deprived of their advantage. They were deprived of the benefit of Rs. 16000 crore only two crops. This is how things are going on in this country. That is why my friend has brought this Bill.

Similarly regarding credit facility while the target for credit to agricultural sector was Rs. 16,500 crore for the year 1991-92, do you know how much amount was disbursed? It was hardly Rs. 11,200 crore. If this is the way in which things are going on, how will farming improve, how will we have enough to meet our growing population needs and also the export obligations? If we export, we will get the maximum advantage. As I told you, in international market the prices are quite attractive. We can, provided we have surplus. This Government must give a go by to the wrong policies that have been pursued all these years where the farmer is deprived of a fair and reasonable price on his hard produce, which he got risking the nature, the calamities and everything. Many a time he is pledging his wife's gold ornaments in the banks. But he is not given remunerative price. If this basic policy is changed realistically with forward looking approach, our country will become number one agro power in the entire world because we have such resources. We have land, we



[Sh. Sobhanadreeswara Rao]

have hard working people, we have enough quantity of irrigation, water and precipitation is there. If climate permits, we can grow at least two crops in a year.

I congratulate Shri Rawat for bringing forward this Private Member's Bill to give an opportunity for this House to discuss a very important issue. I hope the hon. Minister will take care of all these views expressed in this House and he will bring forward suitable changes in the agricultural price fixation policy which is the main objective of my friend.

I thank you for giving me this opportunity.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The next speaker is Prof. K.V. Thomas.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN (Murshidabad): That means I am not getting a chance to speak today.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Actually Shri Uddhab Barman's name is there. Instead of him, you can speak.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN: That is not the point. This is the Private Members' Bill.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: While preparing the list, some mistake must have been crept in.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN: I gave my name when the mover was moving the Bill. I have no right to challenge your discretionary power. I am not speaking.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I came to know that some mistake has crept in. It is an

excusable misiake.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN: But the schedule time is only two hours. That means I am not getting the chance.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Immediately after Prof. Thomas, you will have a chance.

*(Interruptions)*

PROF. K. V. THOMAS (Ernakulam): Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, I support the spirit in this Bill to give a remunerative price to the agricultural produce in our country. The CACP decides the floor price or the remunerative price of the agricultural products. But there are some defects in the functioning of the CACP. One is only a few crops like wheat and rice, come under the purview of the CACP. The second defect is that CACP decisions are not time-bound. As a result, our farmers are not getting justice from CACP. This Bill has been brought at a time when the agricultural policy of this Government is under discussion in the Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture. I am sure that deliberations in this House will definitely be brought before the Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture. So, my first suggestion is that all the agricultural products, including cash crops, should be brought under CACP. Secondly, a time-bound decisions has to come from CACP.

In Kerala, our major cash crop is coconut. Every year, we come to Central Government to fix the remunerative price. This year, the price of coconut has crashed down. For the last six months, both the Government of Kerala and the MPs from Kerala are knocking at every gate of the Krishi Bhavan to fix a remunerative price and declare it. But unfortunately till date, the Government of India has completely failed to declare the floor price for coconut. This is

a heavy blow to the farmers of Kerala. That is why I suggest that the CACP should have enough powers so that remunerative price is declared at a suitable time which is advantageous to the farmers.

In the case of rubber also, only recently, the Commerce Ministry has declared the floor price of natural rubber. This results in import of a large quantity of natural rubber which causes a downwards trend in the market. I am not arguing that our farmers should be helped only by giving subsidies subsidised electricity, subsidised fertilisers and subsidised irrigation projects.

Instead of subsidy, if a reasonable price is fixed for agricultural products, we will definitely have a new thrust in our agricultural field. Fortunately, our agricultural sector has grown two or three folds during the last two years. Foodgrain production in 1993-94 is about 11 millions higher than that of 1992-93. We have started exporting agricultural products. So, when this healthy condition is existing in our agricultural sector, my request to the Government is firstly to strengthen the CACP so that all agricultural products are brought under CACP and secondly, to give enough teeth to CACP so that at an appropriate time, advantageous prices are fixed for the farmers.

With these words, I support the spirit of the Bill and the discussions taking place in this House will definitely help the formulation of the new agricultural policy resolution.

[Translation]

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HUSSAIN (Murshidabad): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I support the Bill. That has been presented in the House today. But I disagree with the last word he used, while moving the Bill. Some days back a resolution on Pakistan was

presented in the House. While mentioning it he said that if farmers are hungry and penniless then it will be difficult for them to fight the enemy. I disagree with it because when Shri Lal Bahadur was our Prime Minister, at that time the farmers were in a pitiable condition but they understood the situation. The farmers will not go back in the matter of support to the nation. But as regards and others who keep their money in foreign banks the farmers are not with them. The farmers are closely associated with this land and in any condition they will not give ground. Any how, it is something which is not related with this matter.

Sir, now I come to the real issue. To my mind, discribing farmer's condition is merely a waste of time as everybody knows about it. Last time you abolished subsidy on fertilizers and allowed to import it at cheaper rates. The fertilizer factories are going to close down. Now, we will have to think about their fate. If you do not think about it, it is certainly going to adversely affect the farmers. We all take about remunerative prices to farmers. There is no representative of farmers in the CACP, that is why we are unable to fix right prices. The traders outside are looting. (*Interruptions*)

I would say that the biggest trader is the Union Government itself. Yesterday, when it was being discussed in the House, the hon. Minister told that the price rise is due to an increase in support price being paid to the farmers.

May I know as to the price at which you are selling these stuff and when had you purchased them? What were the procurement and support prices at that time? You make procurement more than your capacity, off course, some of which are being supplied for public distribution and you dispose of the excess in the open market. Do

[Sh Syed Masudal Hussain]

the Government also share this profit with the farmers. Shri Kamaluddin is here. I want to know from him as to the price which he is selling rice which he had procured four to five years ago and stored the same in FCI warehouses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) It had become rotten

SHRISYEDMASUDALHUSSAIN Rice never gets rotten, it is sold after re-screening

Do the Government also share this profit with the farmers? This way our Government seems to be the biggest trader

Apart from this, without considering our requirement, the Government imports foodgrains. When a question in this regard is raised in the House, it is said that this was the decision of the previous Government. What I intend to say is that why you do not pay the same price to our farmers at which you import foodgrains? This way, a decision to go for import is taken in a haphazard manner. At least 2.5 lakhs metric tonne of onions were exported whereas we had to buy it at Rs. 14-15 a kilogram. But was this profit passed on to the farmers?

Besides, when an announcement regarding remunerative price is made and when procurement is made? I belong to West Bengal. When the procurement price for jute is announced and JCI procures it at a time when distress sale is over. The same situation prevails in case of cotton

corporation. It is almost same in regard to apples in Himachal Pradesh and Kashmir. Nobody is ready to purchase them at the rate of Rs. 1.50 - Rs. 2.00 per kilogram. Last year, I had been to Aizol with Dr. Laxminarayan Pandeya, ginger was selling at Rs. 1.50 per kilogram and what is the rate here?

Its benefit does not reach the farmer. Instead, businessmen get the benefit. You do not have an effective concrete policy in this regard. There are laws and you also talk of old laws in this regard. I want to tell you about CWC. It does not mean Congress Working Committee.

Central Warehousing Corporation was started to store the crops of the farmers but instead businessmen are taking benefit of it. You had evolved a good system that a farmer if he keeps his crop in CWC, he will get a loan on it. Have you ever paid any attention in this regard? You also talk about subsidy, but the Government has never paid any attention in this regard. Have you ever paid attention to sanction loans to farmers? There is no use of mentioning Dunkel at this moment. If our agreement will be signed, at what price the farmer will have to purchase the seeds? Nobody is paying attention towards this point that the Government should provide seeds to farmers free of cost. Do you know the market situation? Potatoes are purchased at the rate of Re. 1 or Rs. 2 per kilogram. Then Alloo Bhaje and potato and potato chips are sold at Rs. 8 per 50 grams. Through media and TV it is being advertised and people have developed a taste for these chips and Maggi. The businessmen, industrialists and NRIs are taking benefit of it. I support this Bill and request the treasury benches to support this Bill because this Bill will be withdrawn but the Government must commit first as to when a new Bill will be brought in this regard.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The time allotted for this subject was two hours. Is it the desire of the House to extend the time by one hour?

[Translation]

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA (Mandsaur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I request you to extend the time by one hour.

[English]

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Private Members' Bill started 15 minutes late and the allotted time comes to an end by 6.16 hours. If the House desires, we may sit up to that time.

(Interruptions)

18.00 hrs.

SHRI YAIMA SINGH YUMNAM (Inner Manipur): I protest. I have been waiting for quite some time, but I have not given the chance. I have waited for three or four rounds. I thought that after other Members finish their speeches, you will call me, but you are not calling me. I want to exercise my right of speaking. It is a sheer injustice.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: According to the information which I have received, no political party has been given a third chance. Mr. Yaima Singh the mover of this Bill Mr. Rawat has spoken. Now I have called an-

other Member Mr. Baliyan. So, it is a wrong impression that I have given a third chance to one political party. You will be given the first chance on the 11th March.

SHRI YAIMA SINGH YUMNAM: Are you giving me a chance today or next time?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I have no objection if the hon. Members are interested to sit for some more time. But, it appears, they are exhausted. Next time, you will be given the first chance to speak.

SHRI YAIMA SINGH YUMNAM: Sir, it is unfair.

[Translation]

SHRI NARESH KUMAR BALIYAN (Muzaffarnagar): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I request you to say the 70 per cent of the population is in the field of agriculture.

[English]

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA (Mandsaur): Let him be on his legs. You can adjourn the House now.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: All right. The House stands adjourn to meet on Monday, the 28th February, 1994 at 11.00 a.m.

18.03 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, February 28, 1994/Phalgun 9, 1915 (Saka).*