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Title: Need to overhaul the existing mechanism of procurement of farm produce.

SHRI JOSE K. MANI (KOTTAYAM): Contribution of primary sector agriculture " which was more than 60% - 50 years back has come down to 15% now. But 50% of the population is still depending on agriculture. The increase in prices of agricultural produce - both food and non food - has not grown in proportion to the increase in income of others like Government/PSU employees or even organized sector in the private sector. This created further widening of the gap between farmers and others. The present prices of almost all farm produce are not providing a surplus for the very existence of members of a farmer family. No surplus to repay the loan. Increase in DA is based on consumer price index. But price of farm produce is not likewise. There is a need to fix remunerative price for each agriculture produce - based on input cost, price hike of inputs and a reasonable living income for the family of farmers. Thus remunerative price fixing should be done by the central and state govt. like creating a new mechanism on the lines of GST council comprising of central and state ministers. Procurement of agricultural produce below the remunerative price should be made illegal by law.

We had an example in Kerala - Remunerative price for natural rubber is Rs 150 and for paddy it is around Rs. 22 likewise there should be price fixation. Most of the Indian farm produce is consumed locally. This being the situation, Government should design a mechanism for farm produce procurement by seeking central and state govt. participation and participation of private sector co-operatives and farmers collectively. A high power Parliamentary Committee which includes one representative from each political party which has representation in the Lok Sabha should be constituted immediately to study the reasons and suggest solutions within 6 months . The Committee should have the power to summon any officer including the Cabinet Secretary and any document. If demonetization and GST can be implemented, the problems of the farmers can also be solved. All the present subsidy, programmes and help of the Government to the farming community and agriculture need to be revisited. Instead of subsidy the government should fix remunerative price and assure procurement of the produce at the above price and transfer the amount through banks. The Central Govt. should act fast.

...(Interruptions)

14.17 hours

*(At this stage, Shri K.C. Venugopal and some other
hon. Members came and stood on the floor near the Table.)*