

IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) and (b) The Draft Ninth Five Year Plan, 1997-2002 approved at internal meetings of the Planning Commission which was released on March 1, 1998 by the then Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, states that because of various reasons a clear-cut input subsidy policy should be evolved for Ninth Plan. The Government have decided to review this Draft so as to suitably reflect the altered priorities, as enunciated in the National Agenda for Governance. Detailed action plans are already under preparation which will, upon finalisation, be integrated with the existing draft.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. Government have not discontinued agricultural subsidies, nor conducted any study to evaluate the impact discontinuation of subsidies would have on agricultural growth.

Import of Coconut

*107. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether import of coconut oil, copra and coconuts has caused reduction in price of coconuts produced by farmers of the country ;

(b) whether import of these items is likely to continue as they are allowed in the canalised list of imports ;

(c) whether coconut farmers are the worst sufferers due to fall in price of their produces on account of import ; and

(d) the steps Government propose to take to safeguard the interest of Indian farmers and also to get them remunerative price of their products?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) to (c) As per the Export & Import Policy in the past and in existence, the import of coconut, copra and coconut oil is canalised through State Trading Corporation and Hindustan Vegetable Oils Corporation Limited. No change in this policy is under consideration. As the import of coconut/Copra and coconut oil has been very minimal, any fall in the prices of copra/coconut cannot be attributed to their imports.

(d) To safeguard the interest of the farmers, the Government of India announces every year the Minimum Support Price (MSP) to give incentive to the farmers for higher investment in agriculture and adoption of modern technology. The MSP is announced on the basis of recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) which takes into account a number of factors, namely, cost of production, changes in input prices, input/output price parity, trends in market prices, demand-supply situation, parity between prices paid and prices received, (terms of trade for agriculture), international prices

and effect on industrial cost structure, general price level and cost of living.

The Government fixes MSP keeping in view the recommendations of the CACP, the views of the concerned Central Ministries and State Governments as well as other relevant factors. The Government is also implementing various plan programmes for development of coconut. Financial assistance/incentives are provided for planting materials, pest and disease control, inputs and extension and training etc.

Food Processing Units

*108. SHRI SURESH CHANDEL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to set up food processing units in collaboration with Japan and other countries; and

(b) if so, the number of units proposed to be set up under collaboration agreements to be signed with Japan and other countries and location thereof, state-wise ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Global Peace.

*109. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether India has extended full support to UN Secretary-General in his efforts in establishing a multi-polar world and to bring about global peace and development;

(b) if so, the specific steps taken by him in that direction; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto during the past months?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) :

(a) to (c) The UN Secretary-General has proposed a reforms package in July 1997 to revitalise the UN. The Government has welcomed the UN Secretary-General's efforts in this direction and is actively participating in the discussions underway in the General Assembly on these proposals with the objective of making the UN more responsive to the concerns of the majority of its member countries viz. the developing countries.