

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO B/38

**B/38 The Honourable Fifth Member for La Caverne and Phoenix
(Mr. Soodhun)**

To ask Dr the Honourable Minister of Agro Industry and Fisheries: -

Whether, in regard to the collection of milk, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Agricultural Marketing Board, information as to if the Board has stopped same and, if so (a) since when and (b) if any alternative support is being provided to the cow breeders?

REPLY

Mr. Speaker Sir,

I would like to invite the Honourable Member to refer to my reply to PQ B/1129, wherein I indicated that the Agricultural Marketing Board would run the Milk Marketing Scheme until May 2008. I wish to highlight that at the start of the scheme in 1985, the AMB was collecting 5,000 litres of milk daily and as at date the amount has been reduced to 450-500 litres. There has not been an increase in the amount of milk collected by AMB though the purchase price has been increased from Rs 12.00 to Rs 17.00 per litre as from 16 December 2007. Cow breeders fetch a higher price on the open market in the range of Rs 25.00 to Rs 35.00 per litre.

2. Regarding part (b), following discussions which I had in February last with representatives of cow-breeders led by the Mouvement Pour l'Autosuffisance Alimentaire (M.A.A) and officers of AREU, FARC, the Decentralised Cooperation Programme (DCP), Empowerment Programme and the Ministry of Industry, Small and Medium Enterprises, Commerce and Cooperatives. The following decisions have been taken:-

- (i) four pasteurization units will be set up at Nouvelle Decouverte, La Brasserie, Henrietta and Triolet. These will be managed by the respective Cooperative Societies and priority will be given to Nouvelle Decouverte and Triolet.
- (ii) AMB would provide a one-off amount of Rs 5 million for start of the project;
- (iii) AREU through the Agricultural Technology Diffusion Scheme will assist the four Cooperative Societies to initiate action for the setting up of the proper cooling and pasteurization system on a priority basis; and
- (iv) 58 collection cans (bidons) from AMB will be put at the disposal of the Cooperative Societies and the whole cooling unit at Palmar LPU will be coupled to the new pasteurization unit at Nouvelle Decouverte.

3. I would further wish to inform the House that:

- (i) My Ministry will assist the Nouvelle Decouverte Cow Breeders Cooperative Society in the erection of the building to house the pasteurisation plant in terms of technical know-how and supply of concrete blocks.
- (ii) the DCP is financing a project at the Nouvelle Decouverte Cooperative Dairy Farm to the tune of Rs 3 million out of a project value of Rs 4 million. The project comprises laying of pipe network for distribution of water and upgrading of the access road. The DCP has already disbursed an amount of Rs 900,000 on completion of the water pipe network. Works for the access road are about to start.

- (iii) Large players in dairy activities namely Krish Cow and Dairy Products Ltd, FAIL and Surat and Co Ltd who will set up their own marketing system for pasteurized milk propose to buy the fresh milk from small operators as well.
- (iv) cow breeders who are members of a Cooperative Society are now benefitting from a grant of Rs 40,000 from the Ministry of Industry, Small and Medium Enterprises, Commerce and Cooperatives for the upgrading of cow byres to meet standards and for good agricultural practice. As at date, twenty cow breeders have taken advantage of this facility;
- (v) to increase the herd size and milk production, a grant scheme of Rs 15,000 per cow imported by Cooperative Society up to a maximum of Rs 300,000 per Cooperative Society has been launched in March 2008 by the Ministry of Industry, Small and Medium Enterprises, Commerce and Cooperatives.
- (vi) A total extent of 422 A of state land has been earmarked for dairy projects. As at date, lease agreements have been signed for 341 A. Under the 500 A Scheme, the Rose Belle Sugar Estate Board has allocated 85 A at Le Val to 51 beneficiaries.
- (vii) Discussions are being held in consultation with Ministry of Finance on other incentives to be provided for the dairy sector.