

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO B/1131

B/1131 The Honourable Fifth Member for La Caverne and Phoenix

(20.11.07) (Mr Soodhun)

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

Whether, in regard to the Agricultural Marketing Board, he will, for the benefit of the House, obtain from the Board, information as to its present financial situation?

REPLY

Mr Speaker Sir,

I am advised by the Agricultural Marketing Board (AMB) that it is projecting a loss of Rs 50 million for 2007.

2. The main reason for this projected deficit is the sale of imported onions on the local market at the fixed price of Rs 12,700 per ton compared to an average purchase price of Rs 28,000 per ton on the international market.

3. In order to prevent the AMB from making further losses, Government has approved a recommendation of AMB to liberalise the selling price of onions on the local market. This decision is effective as from 1 November 2007. Government has also agreed to the partial liberalization of imports of onions as from 1 January 2009 to stimulate competition for that commodity.

4. I would invite the Hon Member to refer to the reply which I made to PQ B/134 wherein greater details have been given regarding the causes that have led the AMB to this very difficult financial situation.