

LOK SABHA

Tuesday, December 19, 1967/Agraha-
yana 28, 1889 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock.

[Mr. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

NATIONAL FOOD BUDGET

X

- *751. SHRI CHINTAMANI
PANIGRAHI:
SHRI SURENDRANATH
DWIVEDY:
SHRI RAMAVTAR SHASTRI:
SHRI ESWARA REDDY:
SHRI SHASHIBHUSHAN
BAJPAI:
SHRI NITIRAJ SINGH
CHAUDHARY:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND
AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether any national food
budget has been prepared in consulta-
tion with the State Ministers; and
(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICUL-
TURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOP-
MENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI
ANNASAHIB SHINDE): (a) and (b).
The preparation of a National Food
Budget has been deferred till more
reliable data relating to production,
consumption etc. are available, so that
the material on which it is based be-
comes acceptable to all.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI:
The Agricultural Prices Commission
had suggested a procurement target
of 8 million tonnes. But in the Chief
Ministers' conference, in spite of the
best attempts of the Food Minister to
make them agree to a target of 7 mil-
lion tonnes, they agreed only to a
target of 6 million tonnes. Even after
this promise, now some States are
scaling down their targets because of
drought and other conditions. For
example, in Orissa, from 3 million

tonnes, they have come down to a
target of 2 million tonnes.

Now the hon. Minister says that
because of lack of statistics prepara-
tion of a national food budget is being
deferred. In all these 20 years Gov-
ernment has not been in a position to
collect reliable agricultural statistics
which can help us in these critical
years to have a national food budget
providing for a sufficient buffer stock
to meet the shortage in coming years
from the bumper crop this year as
also to reduce imports.

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE: As
far as the procurement target is con-
cerned, it was broadly discussed.
Though the Agricultural Prices Com-
mission had suggested a target of 7-8
million tonnes (*kharif* as well as *rabi*
cereals), the Chief Ministers broadly
discussed this and arrived at no defi-
nite figure, but there was broad agree-
ment that efforts should be made to
procure the maximum. There was
broad agreement over procurement
figures, though some States have held
that the figures are rather on the high
side.

Regarding agricultural statistics,
some difficulties are inherent in the
situation itself, but efforts are being
made to improve them. But it will
take quite some time.

As to the creation of buffer stocks,
I do not think it is dependent on the
collection of elaborate statistics.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI:
What is the procurement target now
agreed upon by the different States?
Also what is the quantity of Imports
Government propose to make in the
coming year? As regards the procure-
ment prices, it was suggested that they
should be at least uniform or should
be enhanced so that they may be
attractive. You know even in the case
of Orissa and some other States, this
matter is still under consideration
when peasants are selling their har-
vests. What steps have Government
taken in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI JAGJWAN RAM): Does all this arise out of this question? There are other questions about procurement prices today.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes. This relates only to the food budget.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI: What about the answers to the other parts?

MR. SPEAKER: He says there are a number of questions on the subject coming up later.

SHRI SRADHAKAR SUPAKAR: These questions may not come up.

MR. SPEAKER: You cannot help it. For that reason, you cannot ask supplementaries on this question.

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : अध्यक्ष महोदय, लोक सभा के पिछले अधिवेशन के समय इस बात की चर्चा थी कि कोई खाद्य बजट तैयार किया गया था, जिस पर उस समय मुख्य मंत्रियों के सम्मेलन में भी विचार किया गया था। चूंकि उस समय कुछ राज्यों ने उसका विरोध किया था, इस लिये उसको स्थगित कर दिया गया। अतः मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो बजट तैयार किया गया था, उसका आधार क्या था, किस बेसिस पर उसको तैयार किया गया था तथा जिन राज्यों ने उसका विरोध किया, उनके विरोध करने का आधार क्या था और अब आगे यह बजट किस आधार पर तैयार किया जाने वाला है ?

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE: The final budget as approved was never formulated. In the initial stage the Foodgrains Policy Committee suggested that we might try to evolve a food budget on the basis of scientific data etc. It was first discussed in the Chief Ministers' Conference, and the conference indicated that some exercise may be made about it. Then an ad hoc expert committee was constituted by the Food Department, and some proposals were put before the

Chief Ministers' Conference, but the concensus at the Chief Ministers' Conference was that since much of the data is lacking, it will not be desirable to formulate the food budget as an accepted proposal, and so it was never accepted.

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : लेकिन आपका जो प्रपोजल है, वह बताइये ? मेरा प्रश्न यह था कि आपका प्रपोजल क्या था ?

SHRI NITIRAJ SINGH CHAUDHARY: May I know from the hon. Minister if, as a consequence of the introduction of improved agricultural technique and the high-yielding varieties, the Government hopes that the food budget for the future in spite of the rise in population, would be balanced?

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE: If I rightly follow the hon. member, naturally our availability of food will depend on production, and though this does not arise out of this question, I may say that if production is ensured, then availability of food would be there.

श्री मधु सिन्धे : मैं मंत्री महोदय से पूछना चाहता हूँ कि राष्ट्रीय विकास कौन्सिल की जो बैठक नई लोक सभा गठित के बाद हुई थी, उसके सामने आपने राष्ट्रीय फूड बजट का एक मसविदा रखा था—क्या यह बात सही है कि उस मसविदे का कुछ राज्यों ने डट कर विरोध किया ? यदि यह बात सही है, तो क्या मंत्री महोदय बतायेंगे कि इस मसविदे में न्यूनतम अनाज कितना और किस राज्य के लिये और अधिकतम अनाज कितना और किस राज्य के लिये रखा गया था ?

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE: I may submit that even the Ministry of Food and Agriculture was not very happy with the statistics that are available, and even before this came up for discussion we indicated that it did not appear to be a feasible proposition. So, it would not be appropriate to assume that some figures were being

imposed on some States and that availability was worked out. Some alternative proposals were there, but I may say that there are so many drawbacks in the entire proposal. For instance, reliable estimates of the actual level of consumption on State-wise basis are not available in the absence of comprehensive surveys of food consumption; data on movement by road on private account from different States are not available; reliable information regarding the extent to which the variations in per capita consumption in different States from year to year are due to difference in levels of per capita income and changes therein is not available; inter-State variations in per capita consumption of cereals and the extent to which ordinarily foods like potatoes, sweet potatoes and tapioca supplement cereals intake in the different States is not available. In the absence of this information it is difficult to judge the extent to which such subsidiary foods can be substituted for cereals particularly in a year of shortage. Therefore, due to various reasons, the proposals were not acceptable.

श्री मधु लिमये : मैं केवल तथ्य जानना चाहता हूँ। ये खुश हैं या नाखुश हैं, पूरी जानकारी है या नहीं है—इससे मुझे कोई मतलब नहीं है। मैं केवल इतना जानना चाहता हूँ पर-कैपिटा कन्जम्पशन का न्यूनतम आंकड़ा किस राज्य के लिये है और अधिकतम किस राज्य के लिये है और कितना है ?

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : Those figures are not available with me at the moment.

श्री मधु लिमये : आपके पास नहीं है—इसका क्या मतलब है। फूड बजट पर प्रश्न है, उस पर चर्चा चल रही है। अगर इस तरह से हर प्रश्न का उत्तर टालना चाहेंगे तो फिर प्रश्न-काल का कोई लाभ नहीं है। अध्यक्ष महोदय, आप इस उत्तर को बाद में दिलवाइये :

MR. SPEAKER : Can you place it later on ?

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : That information will be supplied.

श्री क० ना० तिवारी : भारत सरकार की तरफ से जवाब आया है कि नेशनल फूड बजट के बारे में निश्चय हो रहा है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि 50 वर्ष के बाद रूस और आजादी के बाद चाहना भी—इतने दिनों के बाद 5 मिलियन टन कैंनेडा और दूसरे मुल्कों से अनाज मंगा रहे हैं, रशिया भी मंगा रहा है। ऐसी स्थिति में, जब कि आपकी स्टेटिस्टिक्स भी पूरी नहीं हैं, आपने किस आधार पर फूड-बजट बना दिया है, वह ठीक है या नहीं है—इसके बारे में आपकी क्या राय है ?

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : I have already expressed my views : because of the lack of elaborate scientific data, it is not feasible at this stage to formulate a budget, but as far as my knowledge goes, no other country in the world has any very elaborate food budget, because there are so many unpredictable factors involved in the formulation of such a budget. Agricultural production is dependent on Nature; the figures are never stable and then, even the pattern of consumption differs from region to region in the same country and the intake of food differs from region to region. It is a very complicated problem; it was suggested, but after a careful examination the conclusion was arrived at that it is a very difficult task.

SHRI LOBO PRABHU : Though the consumption figures may not be available, the Food Ministry can give the availability of figures, that is, the total production upon the total population and I would like to enquire from the Minister if these figures for the current year will not be in the region of 18 ounces per head, and if it is 18 ounces per head, what is the justification for controls, particularly, zonal controls ?

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : As a simple rule of three one can do that. A rough estimate of production, and the total population; divide the production

by the total population; it gives you the availability per head. I will put it to you, Sir, and the House, that in matters where millions and millions of producers are involved, is it such a simple proposition? It is not by a simple rule of three—production and total population. The whole thing depends on the marketable surplus that is available and that makes the total availability. Naturally the producer who produces it does not content himself with just 10 ounces or 13 ounces or 14 ounces per head on an average. More is certainly consumed by him and it is natural that it is consumed. Therefore, it does not depend on production only. It depends upon what we procure, and what is the available marketable surplus. With that, what deficit we find in the deficit areas has to be supplemented. Therefore, it is very difficult to have anything like a national budget in food, till we have such an organisation the statistics of which will be accepted both by the Centre and the States. At present, that is always disputed, and we are trying to evolve such an organisation, the statistics presented by which will be accepted both by the Centre and the States.

SHRI LOBO PRABHU : My question has not been fully answered; what about the zonal system?

MR. SPEAKER : Order, order.

SHRI M. N. NAGHNOOR : Sir, the southern States of Madras, Andhra and Mysore are deficit in gram, dal and pulses since the year 1965-66; there was an overall arrangement, but for the last one or two years there is a breakdown of normal supply of gram, gram dal and pulses which are supposed to be the poor man's food in the south. Will the Government take adequate measures to see that there is normal supply of gram and gram dal to each State and that they are supplied at reasonable rates by the surplus States?

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : You want me to reply, Sir?

MR. SPEAKER : That is what I thought; it does not arise out of this question.

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : It does not arise here.

MR. SPEAKER : There are a number of questions on food. You need not ask all questions about food production, budget, etc., here.

SHRI M. N. NAGHNOOR : It is an important item.

MR. SPEAKER : I know, but this is the second question on food and the third one is also on food.

SHRI M. N. NAGHNOOR : Gram is sold at Rs. 3 per kilo in the South. That is also as necessary as rice.

MR. SPEAKER : I know; Shri Kunte may now put his supplementary.

SHRI DATTATRAYA KUNTE : In view of the confusion and want of statistics and unavailability, in order to be effective, may I know if the way out of the difficulty is only to do away with the zones so that the market will find its own level and every consumer will get the foodgrains he requires?

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : At present there is no proposal under consideration to do away with the zonal system. The matter was recently considered at the Chief Ministers' Conference and taking all the aspects into consideration, we decided to continue the zones. So, at present, there is no proposal to revise it.

DEMAND OF FOODGRAINS IN INDIA

752. **SHRI VIRENDRAKUMAR SHAH :** Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the total estimated availability of foodgrains from indigenous sources alone during the current agricultural year; and