

these small savings contributions through institutional agencies, insist on their own personal relatives by way of agencies?

Mr. Speaker: That is a different thing altogether.

श्री बड़े : पोस्टल एम्प्लायीज से जमानत ली जाती है, सिक्क्योरिटी ली जाती है । आप ने जो सात हजार की फिगर दी है, क्या यह सही नहीं है कि यह रकम उनकी जमानत में से वसूल कर ली गई थी ? अगर यह सही है, तो फिर यह बन्द क्यों किया गया है ?

Shri Bhagavati: I cannot say how that money is recovered because these are matters dealt with by the Finance Ministry. I can only answer such questions as relate to the P. & T. Department.

Price of Sugar

*1187. { **Shri K. N. Pandey:**
Shri Bishwanath Roy:
Shri D. C. Sharma:
Shri B. N. Kureel:
Shri Balmiki:

Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the minimum price of sugar announced by him on 17th April, 1963 for different Zones is based on the cost of production in the respective regions;

(b) if so, the cost of production of sugar in each region; and

(c) how much profit per maund of sugar has been allowed to the industry fixing the price for each region?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Shinde): (a) Government have fixed maximum and not minimum prices of sugar in all States. These are not based on cost of production alone, but also having regard to prices prevailing during February-March and the interests of consumers.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

Shri K. N. Pandey: Is it a fact that the duration of the current crushing season in the northern areas consisting of UP, Bihar and Punjab is about 90 days only as against 145 days during the last season? If so, to what extent has the shorter duration affected the cost of production and level of employment?

Shri Shinde: It is true that the duration of the season in respect of the northern sugar factories is less than in other regions of the country. But all these factors have been taken into account by the Tariff Commission while evolving the cost structure of sugar. The Government of India have also arrived at the decision about the price of sugar on the basis of the advice tendered by the Tariff Commission.

Shri K. N. Pandey: Is it a fact that the average cost of production of sugar in East UP and Bihar and Punjab regions for the current season is Rs. 41.58, Rs. 41.97 and Rs. 42.34 respectively? If so, are the control prices for these regions and sub-regions adequate to recover the cost?

Shri Shinde: If the hon. Member is referring to East UP, the season in East UP this year has been about 90 days, and the cost structure evolved by the Tariff Commission takes into consideration the season of a duration of 90 days. It includes 12 per cent return on capital employed; it also includes the profit margin that is necessary for the industry and is considered by the Tariff Commission, to be given to the industry.

Shri D. C. Sharma: The policy of fixing minimum and maximum prices has not worked well as our ordinary experience shows, and it has led to shortage of sugar, black-marketing in sugar, hoarding of sugar . . .

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. He should come to the question now.

Shri D.C. Sharma: Therefore, I want to know from the hon. Minister whether they will fix an average price which should be prevalent in almost all States of India so that the consumer does not suffer from these ills.

Shri Shinde: The price has been evolved mainly taking into consideration the interests of the consumer as well as other interests concerned.

Shri Inder J. Malhotra: In the determination of the price of any commodity, the cost of production is a very important factor. What are the difficulties before Government due to which the price cannot be based on the cost of production?

Shri Shinde: As I have already submitted, the price is based on cost of production plus 12 per cent return on capital employed.

Shri Tyagi: What is the minimum and maximum profit guaranteed to sugar millowners? May I know if the same percentage or some percentage is guaranteed to the sugarcane growers also? Because, I understand sugarcane is being taken from the growers on the sucrose content, that means, on cost of production. Is any profit guaranteed to the cultivators as well?

Mr. Speaker: He has answered it.

Shri Tyagi: No. He did not.

Mr. Speaker: He might answer it again. The Member says that . . .

Shri Shinde: Now, at present, the cane price is based on the sugar content, recovery basis. That has nothing to do with the profit margin that is allowed to the sugar industry.

Shri Tyagi: That is what I am objecting to. How is this partial treatment meted out to the industry when the cultivators are not guaranteed any profit?

Mr. Speaker: He should not get angry with me on that.

Shri Tyagi: I have to see towards you; I am sorry.

Mr. Speaker: Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad.

Shri Tyagi: May I submit, Sir, the interests of the cultivators are not being looked into at all. Therefore, we as representatives of the cultivators must raise this.

Mr. Speaker: He wanted information; that has been given. If he is not satisfied with the policy that the Government is pursuing and wants to argue, he will have a different opportunity.

Shri Tyagi: May I humbly put it, how is it that some margin of profit has been guaranteed to the urban people, meaning thereby those who are mill-owners, but the same margin of profit is not guaranteed to the cultivators as well in fixing their price?

The Minister of State in the Ministry Food and Agriculture (Dr. Ram Subhag Singh): Last year this matter was referred to in this House. You will remember that last year, the season was unusually large. At that time, many hon. Members said that the growers should be given higher prices. But, the cane growers could not get higher prices. So, this year too the complaint is that the sugar factories are not being given prices for their sugar on the basis of their cost of production and the cost of production, it is said, has gone up because the crushing season was less. There is something which contradicts each other. Therefore, I fully agree that because the cane growers get only on the recovery basis, we had to give this concession that they should feel free to give their cane to gur or khandsari industry. So they get a higher price. It shall be our endeavour to protect the growers as well as the consumers' interests. We won't allow the growers to suffer.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad: May I know, if in spite of the reasonable cost of production and the reasonable profit given to the mill-owners as the Minister himself has stated, whe-

ther with the rising of prices of sugar in all parts of the country over the maximum price fixed by the hon. Minister, in the hon. Minister's opinion, the interests of the consumers are being served and if they want to bring down prices?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Actually, there is no sugar shortage. Because, we had a balance of about 12 lakh tons, and this year, even if we say that the production was less, it is over 21 lakh tons. In all, at present, sugar is somewhere near about 30 lakh tons in our country. If we give a margin for the quantity of sugar which we shall be exporting, even then, there is about 25 or 26 lakh tons of sugar with us. So, this artificial scarcity has been created by having in mind that the international prices have gone up and so we should earn greater profit. We shall see that a curb is put on this profit-making tendency.

An Hon. Member: How?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Because, we shall set up fair price shops if need be. All the State Governments have been authorised to take suitable action against persons who are not dealing properly in sugar either with regard to dealers or retailers.

श्री श्रीकारलाल बेरवा : ये जो शूगर के भाद निर्धारित हुए हैं, इनको निर्धारित करने से पहले क्या गन्ना उत्पादकों से भी कोई राय ली गई थी या सरकार ने स्वयं ही कर दिये हैं ?

डा० राम सुभग सिंह : जो कीमत है, अलग अलग राज्यों में अलग अलग निर्धारित की गई है, पंजाब में प्रति किलो १ रूपया २० नए पैसे है और दूसरी जो अच्छी क्वालिटी की है उसकी १ रूपया २३ नए पैसे है । होलसेल कीमतें हर स्टेट में थोड़ी कम-बेश हैं । विहार में ४० रूपये ५० नए पैसे है । वेस्ट बंगाल में ४१ रूपये ५० नए पैसे है । उस तरह से हर स्टेट की हैं । मैं इस को रख दंगा । अलग अलग स्टेटेल प्रादसिस भी इस आधार पर हैं ।

श्री श्रीकारलाल बेरवा : क्या गन्ना उत्पादकों से भी कोई राय ली गई है या नहीं ली गई है ?

श्री त्यागी : वह बेचारे सिटिजेन्स थोड़े ही हैं ?

डा० राम सुभग सिंह : सिटिजेन्स से अलग अलग राय लेने के लिए कोई ऐसी संस्था नहीं है जिस को पूरी तरह प्रतिनिधित्व करने का अधिकार हो ।

Shri S. M. Banerjee: I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it has been brought to his notice that after he placed the Sugar Control Rules on the Table of the House, sugar has gone underground and is being sold at Rs. 1:50 and Rs. 1.75 even in U.P., where there are the maximum number of sugar factories; if so, what steps have been taken, what apparatus has been evolved by the State Government, and why so much delay has taken place.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: The apparatus has been set up. If the hon. Member has any city or any particular area in mind, he may let us know and we shall immediately take steps.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: It is so in the whole of U.P. and it has come in bold letters in the newspapers.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: He can give examples.

Shri Kapur Singh: Can this House have a precise break-up of the price structure into cost of production, State levies and private profits?

Mr. Speaker: All this?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: As stated by my colleague in reply to a previous supplementary, this price has been fixed not exactly on cost of production basis, because we do not want that the cane grower should be made to suffer, and so only 12 per cent return has been provided for the capital that has been spent on the industry. The other recommendations of the

Tariff Commission have also been taken into account.

Shri Kapur Singh: My question has not been answered.

Mr. Speaker: That cannot probably be answered. He wants the break-up of all this.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: I require notice for that, because that is a matter of greater detail.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: May I know whether Government is considering reintroducing the old method of giving limited supplies per head through fair price and ration shops, which was effective last time, in view of the fact that even in a State like West Bengal the price of sugar is going up?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: As was stated yesterday by the hon. Food and Agriculture Minister, we have been issuing a quarterly quota of 125,000 tons, and that is going to be increased if the State so desires. We shall also resort to the procedure that the hon. Member just now referred to if need be.

श्री क० ना० तिवारी : क्या गवर्नमेंट इंस्टॉन यू० पी०, वेस्टर्न यू० पी०, पंजाब, बिहार और साउथ इन सब के लिये रीजनल बेसिस पर शुगर प्राइस तय करने का विचार कर रही है, ?

डा० राम सुभग सिंह : अमल में अभी जो कीमतें निर्धारित की गई हैं वे तीन महीने पहले की कीमत के आधार पर बहुत कुछ की गई हैं, लेकिन जैसा व्यापी जी ने कहा, केन लिया उसी भाव से गान जो पहले से तय किया गया था। इस लिए तो महीने पहले की बात को ज्यादातर ध्यान में रख कर एंड हाक कीमत तय की गई। इसमें टैरिफ कमिशन की रिक्मेंडेशन को भी ध्यान में रखा गया है।

Shrimati Savitri Nigam: May I know if the hon. Minister is aware that the representatives of the All-India Sugar Mills Association in one of their recent meetings have declared that if the price of sugarcane is increased by four annas and if the disparity in the fixation of prices is not removed, there are very many chances that there will be a shortfall of 30,000 tons in the coming year and some of the sugar mills also will be closed? If the answer is in the affirmative, what action is Government taking to see that this situation does not arise?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: I do not fully share the views that have been expressed by the Mill Owners Association as has been disclosed by the hon. Member, because nobody had prevented them from paying higher prices for the cane that they purchased. The cane was diverted to gur and khandsari because the cane growers got higher prices. As for this shortfall of 30 lakh tons, the total quantity of sugar that is produced in India is only about 30 lakh tons.

Shrimati Savitri Nigam: 30,000 tons.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: We are not going to be guided exactly by that advice because sugarcane price is the minimum, and they could have paid the maximum price but they did not pay.

श्री शिवनारायण : मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि जब चीनी की इंटरनेशनल प्राइस बढ़ गई है तो गन्ना पैदा करने वालों को बोनस ग्राफ प्राफिट क्यों नहीं दिया जाता। इसमें सरकार को क्या आपत्ति है ?

डा० राम सुभग सिंह : आपत्ति तो कुछ भी नहीं। हम लोग पूरा देना चाहते हैं। लेकिन जब तक गन्ने की कीमत कम थी तब तक हम नेशनल प्राइस देने थे। जब चीनी की कीमत बढ़ रही है तो वह इंटर-नेशनल प्राइस मांगते हैं। इस लिये उन्हें

इंटरनेशनल प्राइस लेने की इजाजत नहीं दी जा रही है। सारा हल्ला केवल इस लिए हो रहा है कि उन्हें ज्यादा मुनाफा लेने का मौका नहीं मिलता। हम लोग चाहते हैं कि जितनी गन्ने की कीमत दी गयी है उसे भी देखा जाना चाहिये।

Shri P. Venkatasubbaiah: May I know whether it is a fact that the indecision and hesitancy of the Government to face realities regarding the cost of production has resulted in the sugar scarcity?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: The cost of production of sugar this year has been based chiefly on the cost of production during the previous season and one can say as was stated by Shri Kashinath Pandey that the season was a little less. When the season is a little larger no concession is given to the cane grower. So, when it is less, the cane growers and the consumers should make it up.

Shri Shivaji Rao S. Deshmukh: What was the basis for fixing of sugar prices? Is it a fact that regional prices of sugar were fixed on the basis of freight difference from sugar surplus States to sugar deficit States and is it also a fact that a uniform pattern of sugar price fixation would amount to a tax on efficiency in the opinion of the Tariff Commission?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: The Tariff Commission's advice has always been taken into consideration and it shall receive our serious consideration in future also. . . (Interruptions.)

Shri Sonavane: Is it a fact that Maharashtra produces highest sugar content in India because of the efficient working of the factories and the preference in transport to other areas is acting as a deterrent to more production of sugar?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Actually it is not correct that Maharashtra mills are getting less price because in Maha-

ashtra the fixed price is Rs. 41 per maund whereas in Bihar it is Rs. 40.50; in U.P. Rs. 40.50; in Punjab Rs. 41; in West Bengal Rs. 40.50. There are different rates for different States... (Interruptions.)

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. I am calling Hem Barua.

Shri Hem Barua: The hon. Minister said that there was an artificial sugar famine . . . (Interruptions.)

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Today is the last day, Sir, they want to put some questions.

Mr. Speaker: That is why I have allowed half an hour for this one question.

Shri Hem Barua: On account of the artificial sugar famine, which the hon. Minister has himself admitted there has been an exorbitant rise in the price of sugar to Rs. 130 or Rs. 140 per bag of 100 kilos. The price of sugar in Assam is the highest in the country. May I know what immediate steps have been taken by Government to check the rise in prices, with special attention to the interest of the under-developed State of Assam.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: I shall consult the Assam Government and if they want we shall send some sugar to put a curb on the prices. But I do not agree that the price is as exorbitant as the hon. Member has stated. If the price is high we shall try to bring it down.

Shri Tyagi: Is it not a fact that there were numerous enquiries into the cost structure of sugar either through the Tariff Commission or other organisations and may I know if the Government has ever agreed to make an assessment of the rising cost of production of sugarcane? If so, may I know what is the result of their enquiry or whether that is not taken into account at all? Let the matter be clarified before the country.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: I am going to give full consideration to this fact, because the cost of production of the cultivators is going up, because they require so many essential things and the prices of those things have gone up. So, naturally, we shall have to pay attention to that and I shall do that.

Shri Tyagi: Has any enquiry been made?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Not yet; later on it will be made.

Some Hon Members rose—

Mr. Speaker: I have allowed 20 minutes on this question. Next question.

Kolaghat Bridge

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*1188. { **Shri Subodh Hansda:**
 { **Shri S. C. Samanta:**

Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to construct another Railway bridge at Kolaghat on South Eastern Railway;

(b) if so, when this decision was taken;

(c) the reason for construction of another Rail bridge at that place; and

(d) whether the plan and estimate have been prepared and if so, the total amount estimated for that purpose?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Railways (Shri S. V. Ramaswamy):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) November, 1962.

(c) The new bridge near Kolaghat over Rupnarayan river is required in connection with the laying of a third line between Santragachi and Panchkura.

(d) Plans and estimate are under preparation. The total cost of provid-

ing the third line including the bridge over Rupnarayan river is estimated to be approximately Rs. 12 crores including approximately Rs. 3 crores for this new bridge.

Shri Subodh Hansda: May I know whether this bridge will be financed and constructed from internal resources or outside resources will be utilised and if so, what is the quantum of help that will be necessary for this purpose?

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: The construction of these bridges require special steel and this may have to be imported. I do not have the exact figures now.

Shri Subodh Hansda: May I know when it is likely to start construction of this bridge?

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: As soon as the materials are gathered the estimates and plans are ready, it will commence.

Shri S. C. Samanta: Is it not a fact that within a few yards of the construction of the existing bridge, a road bridge is being built under the Ministry of Transport? May I know whether the Transport Ministry and the Railway Ministry have consulted each other as to the necessity of a rail-cum-riad bridge, before constructing this particular bridge here?

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: I am not aware of any discussion between the Railway Ministry and the Ministry of Transport. So far as this project is concerned, it is expected ultimately to have a double line to meet the increased rail traffic.

Shri D. C. Sharma: I have great sympathy for my Bengali friends, but may I know why it has been found to be necessary to have three bridges—2 rail bridges and another bridge for road transport—whereas on the Jamuna, we have only one bridge which is also not very helpful?