

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: That is beside the point. After all, we cannot attend every meeting. Invitation is all right.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. Is it that because Shri Kamath was there, the word 'might' was used?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: No, Sir. We want to formulate our policy and to implement it as expeditiously as possible and we want to take every Member fully into confidence. But if they do not tender any advice, and when action is taken in accordance with the advice tendered by 90 per cent of the representatives of the cotton growing areas, I think they should accept it. At that meeting, I talked about compulsion, but I hope that the textile mills will themselves come forward and purchase the entire cotton crop. I will see that the entire crop, whether of Indore or of Hoshangabad, wherefrom the two hon. Members come, is purchased in time before March.

Shri Ranga: I am glad we are having these assurances from my hon. friend. But so much depends upon the implementation thereof. I do not know which other Ministries are involved in this. When the mills are assured of production of cotton from certain areas, why is it that Government find it so difficult to persuade them to agree to pay reasonable prices to the cotton growers and also to lift all the cotton that is being produced by them?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri S. K. Patil): My hon. colleague has said that everything that is possible is being done. But I would just amplify that.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: What is that 'possible'?

Shri S. K. Patil: The Ministry of Agriculture is responsible only for the production of cotton, and the other Ministry for the other things. But I am not bringing in that plea. Both the Ministries are acting in concert,

so that wherever it is necessary, and the cotton-growers' interests are being affected, we approach the Ministry, take their co-operation in getting these things done. What is attempted to be done is this, that if the persuasion does not succeed, then compulsion inevitably becomes necessary, but I am quite sure that this will be a hint and a warning to the mill-owners, and if they do not take it in time, the other thing will necessarily follow.

Payment of Sugarcane Price

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*9. { **Shri Bishwanath Roy:**
Shri Bibbuti Mishra:
Shri Bade:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that a considerable amount of sugarcane price of the sugarcane supplied to the sugar mills in 1961-62 season has not been paid by the Sugar factories concerned;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government have taken any steps for its immediate payment; and

(d) whether any proposal is under consideration of Government for compensation of the loss to the growers' unions owing to non-payment of the sugarcane price?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Shinde): (a) and (b). Rs. 99 lakhs were payable on 31st January, 1963. This works out to less than 1% of the total cane-price payable for 1961-62.

(c) The State Governments have been asked to take necessary action for expeditious clearance of the arrears.

(d) No, Sir.

Shri Bishwanath Roy: May I know whether Government proposes to take any step which may force sugar factory owners to pay the amount

that is due to the growers just after the supplies of sugarcane?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. M. Thomas): It is a statutory obligation on the part of the sugar factories to pay the sugarcane price within 14 days of the receipt of the sugarcane, but there are difficulties for the sugar factories also. About 70 per cent of the price of sugar is represented by the price of sugarcane. The season is there only for four or five months. So, they have to take all the cane within those four or five months. It may not always be possible for them to pay this price within 14 days, but we have asked the State Governments to see that the sugarcane price is paid in time. As far as the year 1961-62 is concerned, what is outstanding is only 0.87 per cent of the total sugarcane price. Out of Rs. 114 crores that is due, they have already paid over Rs. 113 crores, so that only about Rs. 99 lakhs remain. As far as the present year is concerned, out of Rs. 44 crores payable, Rs. 32 crores have already been paid and only Rs. 12 crores remain to be paid.

Shri Bishwanath Roy: In view of the usual practice of non-payment of sugarcane price in time, has Government taken any step in any year for enforcing the policy of payment of sugarcane price within two weeks?

Shri A. M. Thomas: I said it is a statutory obligation, but in all cases it may not be possible to pay within the period of a fortnight. It is up to the State Governments to take steps to enforce it under the Revenue Recovery Act and adopt other measures. We are addressing them to do so.

Shri Inder J. Malhotra: May I know if any action has been taken up till now against any factory owner for non-payment of sugarcane price?

Shri A. M. Thomas: Yes. Under the Revenue Recovery Act, steps have been taken against some.

Shri Radhelal Vyas: May I know whether Government propose to prescribe some penalty to the sugar factories instead of resorting to revenue recovery procedure?

Shri Shinde: Penalty is prescribed under the statute.

श्री जगदेव सिंह सिद्धान्ती : जिन क्षेत्रों में कि गन्ने की कमी है क्या उन क्षेत्रों के किसानों को सहयोग देने की किसी योजना पर सरकार विचार कर रही है ?

अध्यक्ष महोदय : क्या गन्ने की खेती बढ़ाने के लिये ?

श्री जगदेव सिंह सिद्धान्ती : जी हाँ ।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : गन्ने की कीमत पहले ही नहीं मिल रही है और आप और गन्ने की खेती बढ़ाने के लिये कह रहे हैं ।

Shri Vishram Prasad: May I know how much bonus allowed under the provisions before 1959 still remains unpaid to the cultivators by the mill-owners?

Shri A. M. Thomas: As far as bonus is concerned, the House knows that very recently the necessary legislation was enacted in Parliament, and in accordance with that the amount due from each factory is being fixed, and they will be paid after that.

Shri Firodia: May I know whether whether the factories pay any interest; if so, the rate?

Shri A. M. Thomas: I am not aware of factories paying interest.