

cussions with them, but ultimately it is the State Government which has to take the responsibility.

श्री म० सा० द्विवेदी : प्वाइंट ऑफ ऑर्डर ।

इस प्रश्न के घंटे में जो लोग प्रश्न करते हैं और जिनके नाम उन प्रश्नों के सामने दिये रहते हैं, उनके खड़े होने पर भी आप उनकी तरफ से अपनी प्रांख इधर उधर हटा लेते हैं और जिन लोगों का नाम उस प्रश्न के सामने नहीं लिखा है उनको पुकारा जाता है । यदि हमारे सवाल करने पर कोई ऐतराज हो तो हम सवाल ही न किया करें क्योंकि खड़े होने पर भी हमारा नाम नहीं पुकारा जाता ।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आप बैठ जायें ।

जब किसी सवाल के सामने इतने ज्यादा नाम होते हैं कि सब को नहीं बुलाया जा सकता, तो वह सवाल सारे हाउस के सामने आ जाता है । फिर भी मैं कोशिश करता हूँ कि जिनके नाम में वह सवाल है उनको बुलाऊँ । लेकिन जब सब को नहीं बुलाया जा सकता तो और मेम्बरों को एक्सक्लूड नहीं किया जाता । ऐसी हालत में आपकी यह शिकायत ठीक है कि मैं सिर्फ सवाल करने वालों की तरफ नज़र नहीं करता बल्कि सारे हाउस की तरफ देखता हूँ ।

श्री म० सा० द्विवेदी : ऐसा है तो क्लर्क बन्द कर दिया जाये ।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : इस पर भी सोचा जा सकता है ।

आप बैठ जाएं ।

Mr. Speaker: Next Question—Shri Rameshwar Tanti.

Shri Rameshwar Tanti: Question No. 33.

Shri Kapur Singh: Sir, Question No. 56 is an allied question and it may also be taken up along with this.

Mr. Speaker: If it is convenient for the Minister, that too might be answered along with this. If he feels that it is not convenient he might not answer it.

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri C. Subramaniam): I think it will be slightly different.

Mr. Speaker: Then only Question No. 33 need be answered.

Prices of Foodgrains

+

Shri Rameshwar Tanti:
Shri Bishanchander Seth:
Shri B. P. Yadava:
Shri Dhaon:
Shri Dinen Bhattacharya:
Dr. Saradish Roy:
Dr. Ranen Sen:
Shri Surendra Pal Singh:
Shri M. L. Dwivedi:
Shrimati Savitri Nigam:
Shri S. C. Samanta:
Shri Subodh Hansda:
Shri S. M. Banerjee:
Shri Yashpal Singh:
Shri Indrajit Gupta:
Shri Kapur Singh:
Shri Vishram Prasad:
Shri B. G. Dubey:
Shri P. C. Boroach:
Shri Bagri:
Shri Hem Raj:
Shri Kashi Ram Gupta:
Shri Jashvant Mehta:
Shri Solanki:
Shri Narasimha Reddy:
Shri P. R. Chakraverti:
Shri Balmiki:
Shri Daji:
Shri Basappa:
Shri Balgovind Verma:
Shri A. S. Saigal:
Shri Kolla Venkataiah:
Shri J. P. Jyotishi:
Shri P. L. Barupal:
Shri Onkar Lal Berwa:
Shri P. K. Deo:
Shri Gushan:
Shri Daljit Singh:
Shri M. L. Jadhav:
Shri Kajrolkar:
Shri Mahananda:
Shrimati Renuka Ray:

*33.

Shri Visudevan Nair:
 Shri Vishwa Nath Pandey:
 Shri Ram Harkh Yadav:
 Shrimati Laxmi Bai:
 Shri E. Madhusudan Rao:
 Shri H. C. Soy:
 Shri B. K. Das:

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

(a) whether the prices of food-grains, especially wheat and rice, have gone up throughout the country during the past six months and are still rising;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the measures Government propose to take to meet the deteriorating situation?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Shri D. R. Chavan): (a) The prices of food-grains have risen during the past 6 months though there was some recession in the prices of wheat soon after the harvest. During the last three weeks of August, the rise in the All-India Index Number of wholesale prices of cereals was relatively small.

(b) The rise in the prices of wheat has been mainly due to two successive years of low production while of rice due to low market arrivals.

(c) The more important of the steps taken to check the rise in prices are:

- (i) Increased imports and distribution of foodgrains through Fair Price Shops;
- (ii) Fixation of maximum wholesale and retail prices;
- (iii) Promulgation of anti-hoarding measures in the States;
- (iv) Tightening up of restrictions on bank advances against foodgrains; and
- (v) Stricter enforcement of licensing control on trade.

Shri Rameshwar Tantia: May I know whether it is a fact that the

prices of wheat and rice for the cultivators were fixed at a lower rate taking into consideration the rise in the prices of other commodities; if so, is it a fact that the cultivators this year have kept more rice and wheat with them than in the previous years and what is the Government doing about that?

Shri C. Subramaniam: The fixation of price is only for the purpose of procurement. In the Southern Zone the procurement of rice has been given up because that was creating distortion with regard to the balance of rice left over with the trade. The whole process of fixing fair prices to the producer is under consideration and, as already stated in the note which I have circulated, a committee has been appointed to fix fair and remunerative prices to the farmer. Later on, the Agricultural Price Commission will take a comprehensive view of the price structure.

Shri Rameshwar Tantia: May I know whether the Government is aware that in some States the price of Indian wheat is double that of the Australian wheat and, if so, has Government examined the reason for such a big difference?

Shri C. Subramaniam: From 1956 onwards we are selling imported wheat at the rate of Rs. 37.50 per quintal. During the last eighteen months the price of indigenous wheat has increased and in some places the price is not only twice but thrice that of the imported wheat. That is one of the factors which has increased the pressure on imported wheat.

Shri Surendra Pal Singh: Some time back the hon. Minister made a statement that if all the foodgrains produced during the last season had come into the market there would be no food shortage today, and the prices would not have risen. In this connection, may I know if the hon. Minister is convinced of the correctness of the production figures that are supplied to him from below and that no false reporting takes place at the lower level.

Shri C. Subramaniam: With regard to production figures I would not be able to say that they are hundred per cent correct but they give us the trend whether the production is on the increase or not; if there are some deficiencies, they would be there every year. Therefore, while the figures may not be accurate even to the thousand tons, the fact remains that they give an idea of the trend in production.

श्री म० ला० द्विवेदी: क्या मंत्री महोदय का ध्यान आज के समाचार पत्रों के उस समाचार पर गया है जिसमें कहा गया है कि दिल्ली के दुकानदारों ने गले की कीमतों के बारे में जो अपनी समझौता किया था उन्होंने उसे मानने से इंकार कर दिया है और वह कीमतों की सूची अपनी दुकानों पर नहीं लटकायेंगे ? अगर दिल्ली में भाव का नियंत्रण नहीं हो सकता तो सारे देश में भाव नियंत्रण के लिए सरकार क्या करने जा रही है ताकि कीमतें और ऊपर न जायें ?

Shri C. Subramaniam: I have seen the press report today. I should find out the actual position and then take some action on that.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: I want to know whether it has been brought to the notice of the hon. Minister that the retail prices of wheat, rice and other articles of food are much more than the wholesale prices and, if so, what steps have been taken by the Government to see that the difference between the retail and wholesale price is minimised

Shri C. Subramaniam: First of all, we want to fix the producer's price and with a reasonable margin the wholesale price. We have to fix the retail price with a further reasonable margin. Then there is the further question of administering prices on which we are taking action, so that

there may not be a large gap between the producer's price and ultimately the consumer's price.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: That is for the future. I am asking about the present.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member was asking about the margin between wholesale and retail prices; not between producer's price and wholesale price.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: All that he has said is about the future. What is happening today? Is there any apparatus with the Government to narrow down the difference?

Mr. Speaker: He has stated what is happening today. He has also stated the steps he is going to take.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: About the future he said that a Committee would be set up. But what about the present?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member has already stated by saying that there is a wide margin. Now it has to be reduced for the future for which something has to be done. He has stated what he is going to do.

Shri Kapur Singh: Is it true that our capital-intensive developmental priorities and our fragmentatively restrictive land policies are the real culprits in this matter and, if so, do the Government propose to reconsider the entire situation in the background of the present experience?

Shri C. Subramaniam: It is a matter of opinion. There can be difference of opinion with regard to this.

Mr. Speaker: The first one is only an opinion and a suggestion. The second one, whether the Government propose to revise their policies, is the only question.

Shri C. Subramaniam: The second question follows the first question; therefore, if there is difference of opinion with regard to that . . .

Mr. Speaker: The Government have no intention. Government do not agree with that opinion.

Shri C. Subramaniam: I do not agree with that opinion.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: You are helping him out.

Mr. Speaker: What should I do?

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Is it necessary? He is capable of taking care of himself.

Mr. Speaker: I did it simply to save time; there was no other objective.

Dr. Ranen Sen: The price of rice started going up immediately after harvesting. Now the hon. Minister has said that this is due to the fact that rice was not being marketed at the proper time. What steps had Government taken when prices started shooting up in certain parts of eastern India?

Shri J. B. Kripalani: They were asleep.

Shri C. Subramaniam: As far as eastern India is concerned, Bengal is the main eastern State. There the maximum and minimum prices had been fixed and I can tell the hon. Member that more or less that price policy has been successfully administered there in spite of difficulties.

श्री सरजू पाण्डेय : अभी माननीय मंत्री ने बतलाया कि चावल के दाम इसलिए बढ़े हैं कि मंडियों में चावल नहीं आया है तो मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि आखिर चावल गया कहाँ ? क्या सरकार ने उन कारणों का भी पता लगाया है कि आखिर चावल मंडियों में क्यों नहीं आया और अगर चावल की चोरी हो रही है तो सरकार उस को बाहर निकालने के लिए क्या कार्यवाही कर रही है ?

Shri C. Subramaniam: We have an idea of the production in the country particularly relatively to the previous

years. As far as rice is concerned, it is accepted by almost everybody that there has been an increased production to the extent of 4 million tonnes during 1963-64 when compared to that of 1962-63. Now, the market arrivals have been much less than what they were during last year; therefore, the entire marketable surplus has not come into the market. Our investigation shows that it is held by bigger producers in collusion with dealers.

Shri Rama Chandra Mallick: May I know whether it is a fact that Government is purchasing paddy at Rs. 25 per quintal in Orissa and selling it at Rs. 34 per quintal?

Mr. Speaker: It is information that he is giving.

Shri Jashvant Mehta: May I know whether Government has decided over the price parity question and price stabilisation? What steps is Government thinking of taking for stabilising prices in future

Shri C. Subramaniam: I have given the steps already taken. With regard to the future also I have indicated that we are trying to fix prices for the producer, wholesaler and the retailer.

Shri Narasimha Reddy: Does the Government propose to fix fair prices of dishes supplied in the hotels where the hotel proprietors have recently been increasing the prices of their dishes in an unbridled manner?

Shri P. K. Deo: Specially of coffee.

Shri C. Subramaniam: I do not think that this arises out of the question here.

Shri P. Venkatasubbaiah: May I know whether Government is aware of the fact that some of the traders are going in the name of producers and are taking the help of governmental agencies, such as, marketing societies and State Warehousing Corporations, to hoard foodgrains thus bringing in high rise in prices; if so, what action

does Government propose to take in the matter?

Shri C. Subramaniam: Evidently the hon. Member is giving information with regard to the situation prevailing in his State. I am aware of such a state of affairs in Andhra and we have to take action taking that into account.

श्री बहाल सिंह : क्या यह सही है कि स्टेट ट्रेडिंग के नारे से प्राफीटीयर्स ने ज्यादा होडिंग की है हालांकि स्टेट ट्रेडिंग हो भी नहीं सकी है लेकिन उस के डर से बाजारों के दाम भी बढ़े हैं ? सरकार इस मामले में क्या सोच रही है ? क्या वह पूरे तरीके से स्टेट ट्रेडिंग करने को तैयार है या जो व्यक्ति प्राफीटीयर्स कर रहे हैं उन को सख्त सजा देने को तैयार है, दोनों में से कौन सा काम होगा ?

Shri C. Subramaniam: To have more comprehensive State trading so that the private trade may not play with the consumers.

Dr. Sarojini Mahishi: The apex banks and the district credit co-operative banks have been instructed not to lend money to the trading community who are inclined to use it for hoarding purposes. But is it not a fact that financial assistance is given to so-called agriculturists on the production of warehouse receipts?

Shri C. Subramaniam: There are restrictions on credit availability for the purpose of storing rice, wheat and other foodgrains. As far as the warehousing corporations are concerned, there also we are placing restrictions with regard to advance of credit against foodgrains.

Shri Basappa: With regard to the proposed Agricultural Price Commission, may I know whether the Government have considered the inclusion of the representatives of farmers in that Commission?

Shri C. Subramaniam: What should be the composition of the Commission is under consideration.

Shri Dinan Bhattacharya: May I know whether the Government is aware that in West Bengal particularly rice is sold in the open market above the declared price fixed by the Government and, if so, what steps the Government is taking to bring down the prices?

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: He says, 'No'.

Shri C. Subramaniam: We are supplying rice through the fair price shops

Shri Dinan Bhattacharya: That is only in Calcutta and in a very limited area.

Shri C. Subramaniam: particularly for families in the Calcutta city at controlled prices. No doubt in the open market it used to be selling at a much higher level. During the recent weeks, the open market prices also have come down considerably and in some districts it is, more or less, equal to the controlled price.

Shri Dinan Bhattacharya: Where? (Interruption).

Mr. Speaker: I have not allowed him the second question. I am very sorry that there is disappointment in the House and that is natural because in each Question there are 40 to 50 names clubbed together. But we are also having the food debate in the House which is to continue for 15 hours.

Shri Namblar: Everybody will not get a chance in the food debate.

Mr. Speaker: And everybody cannot get a chance in the Question Hour. That is the difficulty.

Shri D. C. Sharma: Some are already getting the chance.

Mr. Speaker: All right. Shri D. C. Sharma.

Shri D. C. Sharma: There is a great disparity between the prices paid to the producers and the prices charged by the traders and the prices paid by the consumers. May I know what steps Government have already taken in order to reduce this disparity bet-

ween No. 1 and 2 and No. 2 and 3, specially with reference to consumers?

Shri C. Subramaniam: We have fixed the reasonable margins between the producers' price and the wholesalers' price and the wholesalers' price and the retailers' price. On that basis, the notifications of prices have been made in six or seven of the States. But we are going to fix prices on a more comprehensive scale for the whole of India at the producers' level, the wholesalers' level and the retailers' level allowing only a fair margin.

श्री चं. सा. चौधरी: किन किन राज्यों में आप ने खाद्यान्न के मूल्य निर्धारित किये हैं ?

Congestion in Calcutta and Bombay Ports

+

Dr. Ranen Sen:
Shri Vishram Prasad:
Shri Dinen Bhattacharya:
Dr. Saradish Roy:
Shri Surendra Pal Singh:
Shri Jagdev Singh
Siddhanti:
Shri Yashpal Singh:
Shri Prakash Vir Shastri:
Shri S. M. Banerjee:
Shri P. Venkatasubbaiah:
Shri P. C. Borooah:
Shri Baid:
Shrimati Savitri Nigam:
Shri Yamuna Prasad Mandal:
Shri M. L. Dwivedi:
Shri S. C. Samanta:
Shri P. C. Barman:
Shri C. K. Bhattacharyya:
Shri Kapur Singh:
Shri Solanki:
Shri Buta Singh:
Shri Narasimha Reddy:
Shri P. R. Chakraverti:
Shri K. N. Tiwary:
Shri Eswara Reddy:
Shrimati Renu
Chakravarty:
Shri A. V. Raghavan:
Shri Indrajit Gupta:
Shri Bibhuti Mishra:
Shri J. B. S. Bist:
Shri P. K. Deo:
Shri Mohan Swarup:

*24.

Shri Hukam Chand
Kachhavalaya:
Shri Krishnapal Singh:
Shri Mohammad Elias:
Shri D. N. Tiwary:

Will the Minister of Transport be pleased to state:

(a) whether there was recently a congestion of ships in Calcutta and Bombay ports for several days affecting delivery of foodgrains from ships;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to improve the situation; and

(d) the amount of loss sustained in foreign exchange by way of demurrage at these two ports?

The Minister of Transport (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-3001/64].

Dr. Ranen Sen: In the statement I find, among the various reasons, it is stated that there was a fall in output of foodgrain labour engaged in bagging. My question is: Has the attention of the Minister been drawn to a statement issued by important Congress leaders of the trade unions of the port and dock workers of Calcutta that the output of labour did not deteriorate but on the other hand it is the bungling made by the Dock Labour Board in respect of labourers that was responsible for this catastrophe in the Calcutta port?

Shri Raj Bahadur: There was a slight decline in the output per capita of the labour, and I think that it would be too much to ignore that fact. If I may be permitted to say, in the case of Bombay, whereas the average discharge per day in the month of April was 2,334 tons, it came down to 655 tons in the month of May. I have quoted the figure for only one of the days. I would not like now to go into all the figures for all the days.

Dr. Ranen Sen: I was asking about Calcutta.