

stated to be 25 lakh tonnes. May I know whether that is the normal consumption figure of the country or whether it is the figure to which the consumption has been brought down on account of controls?

Shri C. Subramaniam: I am sure that if there are greater quantities available then there would be more consumption also. I do agree that it is a restricted consumption.

Shri D. C. Sharma: From the statement I find that there is a great deal of imbalance in the production of sugar from State to State. One State produces 778,000 tonnes while another State produces only 2000 tonnes. May I know whether Government have any scheme to rationalise the production of sugar so that the consumption could also go up and the imbalance between one State and another could be reduced as much as possible?

Shri C. Subramaniam: Historically, the sugar factories got established in the initial stages in UP and Bihar and they are the leaders in the production of sugar. We have also taken into account the feasibility of sugarcane production in the various States. For example, Assam produces only 2000 tonnes, because the sugarcane production there is very much limited on account of climatic and soil conditions. That also will have to be taken into consideration. But we are trying to arrive at some regional balance with regard to new licences.

Shri Solanki: Many experts have suggested the making of sugar out of beet-root. May I know whether Government are considering any such proposal?

Shri C. Subramaniam: We are having a pilot project in order to find out the feasibility of sugar production from beet-root.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: May I know whether it is a fact that the total quantity of sugar issued by the Centre to the State Governments is supposed to be distributed through the

State Government machinery, and if so, whether it is, however, a fact that apart from the distribution through the fair price shops, a lot of sugar is being distributed in the blackmarket, and if so, what steps the Central Government are taking to check and see that sugar does not go to the blackmarket when it is supplied by the Centre?

Shri C. Subramaniam: Distribution is done through the State Governments, and we have impressed upon the State Governments to take all necessary steps to see that sugar does not get into the blackmarket; but in spite of that, I do agree that a good deal of sugar has got into the blackmarket, and we are trying to take steps to prevent that.

Shri Bishwanath Roy: In view of the increasing consumption of sugar in the country and its demand outside, may I know whether Government have taken any immediate steps for improving the percentage of sugar from sugarcane?

Shri C. Subramaniam: We are evolving new varieties of cane with greater sucrose content.

Prices of Foodgrains

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Shri P. C. Borooh:
 Shri S. M. Banerjee:
 Shri Yashpal Singh:
 Shri J. B. Singh:
 Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:
 Shri Prakash Vir Shastri:
 Shri Jagdev Singh Siddhanth:
 Shri Hukam Chan
 Kachhavaia:
 Shri Onkar Lal Berwa:
 Shri M. L. Dwivedi:
 Shri S. C. Samanta:
 Shri R. S. Tiwary:
 Shrimati Savitri Nigam:
 Shri Vishwa Nath Pandey:
 Shri Bishwanath Roy:
 Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath:
 Shri Sidheshwar Prasad:
 Shri Bade:
 Shri P. H. Bheel:
 Shri D. C. Sharma:
 Shri Balkrishna Wasalk:

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Shri Ram Sewak Yadav:

Shri Sarjoo Pandey:

Shri Hem Raj:

Shri Ramachandra Ulaka:

Shri Dhuleshwar Meena:

Shri Abdul Ghani Goni:

Shri Rameshwar Tantia:

Maharajkumar Vijaya

Ananda:

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad:

Shri P. K. Deo:

Shri Kapur Singh:

Shri P. K. Ghosh:

Shri P. R. Chakraverti:

Shri Gulshan:

Shrimati Ramdulari Sinha:

Shri Koya:

Dr. L. M. Singhvi:

to those prevailing on the 1st January, 1964;

(b) the percentage rise in the prices of each of these commodities throughout the year from the 1st January, 1964 to the 1st January, 1965; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government to bring down the prices of foodgrains?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Shri D. E. Chavan): (a) and (b). A statement showing the All-India Index-Numbers of wholesale prices of wheat, rice, pulses, ghee, edible oils and vanaspati ghee as stood in the first week of January, 1965 compared to those in the same period of 1964 and also the percentage rise in the price index numbers in 1965 over 1964 is placed on the Table of the Sabha.

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

(a) the prices of wheat (imported and indigenous), rice, pulses, ghee, edible oils including vanaspati ghee on the 1st January, 1965 as compared

STATEMENT

(Base 1952-53-100)

Commodity	Price Index Number		Percentage rise in 1965 over 1964
	1965 (as on 2-1-65)	1964 (as on 4-1-64)	
Rice	127.3	119.6	6.4
Wheat	155.5	111.2	39.8
Pulses	204.9	125.2	63.7
Ghee	155.1	125.3	23.8
Groundnut Oil	176.3	126.7	39.4
Sesamum Oil	193.4	140.9	37.3
Mustard Oil	353.7	172.8	104.7
Vanaspati	165.9	142.5	16.4

(c) Some of the more important steps taken by the Government to stabilize the prices are as follows:—

(i) Fixation of statutory maximum

prices of paddy at which such stocks could be requisitioned;

(ii) fixation of maximum wholesale and retail prices of rice;

- (iii) stepping up of imports of food-grains and distribution of large quantities from Central stocks;
- (iv) introduction of statutory rationing in Calcutta and informal rationing in Kerala;
- (v) tightening up of restrictions on bank advances against foodgrains;
- (vi) setting up of enforcement machineries by the State Governments with assistance from the Central Government;
- (vii) promulgation of anti-hoarding measures as well as introduction of summary trials and stringent punishments for contraventions of food laws and abatement of such contraventions by public servants.

Shri P. C. Borooah: Hoarding is one of the causes for rising prices of foodgrains, and to check that Government promulgated an ordinance for the summary trial of food offences. May I know whether it is a fact that in the absence of the required notification specifying the offences, that ordinance has not been brought into force?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri C. Subramaniam): That is not correct. There is a separate question on that, and there I will give the information. We have issued the notification.

Shri P. C. Borooah: How many months after the promulgation of the ordinance was the notification issued?

Shri C. Subramaniam: On 24th December the Act came into force and on the same date the notification was issued.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: From the statement it appears that the prices of these commodities—rice, wheat, pulses, ghee, mustard oil etc.,—have risen (I am talking of the percentage) from

6.4 to 104.7 (for mustard oil) I would like to know whether after taking all these steps, anti-hoarding measures and so on, the prices have come down, whether there is an inclination to come down, if not, what further steps Government contemplate to take to introduce State trading in foodgrains and of essential commodities?

Shri C. Subramaniam: As far as mustard oil is concerned, as the hon. Member should know, there is already a definite downward trend because of better production. In the same way in groundnut oil and sesame oil, in all the edible oils, the tendency is for the prices to come down.

As far as rice is concerned, it is only a marginal increase and we have fixed statutory prices; particularly in the Southern Zone, the prices are more or less steady at the level of the maximum prices which had already been notified.

As far as wheat is concerned, we are passing through a lean period, but in spite of that, compared to January prices, February prices have come down by seven points, from 155 to 148.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: I wanted to know whether State trading would be introduced.

Shri C. Subramaniam: As the hon. Member is aware, that is why the Food Corporation has been established, and it is getting into the market.

श्री यशपाल सिंह : यह जो स्टेटमेंट तैयार किया गया है कहां की कीमतों के ऊपर तैयार किया गया है। यह दिल्ली की कीमतें हैं या बलिया, बस्ती गोरखपुर की कीमतें हैं। क्या स्टेटमेंट तैयार करते वक़्त यह ध्यान रखा गया है कि बस्ती, गोरखपुर बरीरह में 40 50 मन भी गेहूं नहीं मिल रहा है, और इस स्थिति को दूर करने के लिये सेंट्रल गवर्नमेंट क्या कर रही है।

Shri C. Subramaniam: These are all all-India average prices.

श्री यशपाल सिंह: जो जगहों में ने बतलाई उनकी स्थिति को दूर करने के लिये क्या किया जा रहा है ?

अध्यक्ष महोदय : उन्होंने उन जगहों को मिला कर ऐवरेज बतलाया है ।

श्री यशपाल सिंह : उन को कुछ हां या नहीं में जवाब तो देना चाहिये कि वहां के लिये कुछ कर रहे हैं या नहीं ।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : इसके लिये आप उनसे मिल कर उनकी नोटिस में ले झाइये ।

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: The price index for rice, in a period when the rice harvest has not only been good but when the harvest has come into the market, shows that even after last year there has been a 6.4 per cent increase on 2nd January. May I know why this is so after two good harvests, and whether this is not a clear indication that there must be State trading in the essential food-grains without which it is impossible to bring down prices even with a good crop?

Shri C. Subramaniam: This argument is not necessary to convince that State trading is necessary. I would request the hon. Members to note that in 1964, from April onwards, there was a steep rise, particularly in May, June and July with regard to rice. Then, at that stage, we looked into it and we wanted to fix a producers' price and a consumers' price, for which the Jha Committee was appointed. They took the average of the prices which prevailed in 1964 and on that basis it was fixed. Now, because of the more remunerative prices assured to the producers, particularly with regard to post-harvest price, there is a slight increase of 6.4 per cent.

Dr. L. M. Singhvi: We find from the statement that rise in prices of pulses, mustard oil and wheat has been abnormal and unprecedented. I would like to know whether the Government consider that this is due to the fact that the State Governments have not implemented their procure-

ment policy or because they have encouraged hoarding by the farmer himself?

Shri C. Subramaniam: I do not think there was any positive encouragement by the State Governments in the direction of hoarding by the farmers. Hon. Members are aware that there was shortfall in production, particularly in groundnut, mustard and various other things required for the production of edible oils so also pulses. That is why prices had shot up. For two consecutive years, there was shortfall in production. Fortunately, we are having better prospect of rabi crops.

Shri D. C. Sharma: Have the Government any scheme to step up production of pulses whose price had gone up by 63.7 per cent and of mustard oil whose price has gone up by 104.7 per cent in those States where those things are grown due to suitable climatic conditions so that these common articles of diet may not suffer from the rise in prices?

Shri C. Subramaniam: As far as mustard is concerned, even during the present year, production has gone up very high; it is expected to be a record production as far as mustard is concerned. With regard to pulses also, there was a decrease in production during the last year and the year before the last due to weather conditions. This year it is going to be much better production. Apart from that, we are having various research schemes for evolving better strains of pulses so that during all the years, there might be a higher production level.

Shri D. C. Sharma: Is there some long-range scheme?

Shri C. Subramaniam: That is research.

Mr. Speaker: 'Long range' cannot be discussed during the Question Hour.

Shri Rameshwar Tanti: May I know whether Government have exa-

mined the price of foodgrains paid to the cultivators in comparison with the price of other cash crops and whether....

Mr. Speaker: Not two 'whethers'; only one 'whether' at a time.

Shri Rameshwar Tantia:and whether Government would revise the price of foodgrains?

Shri C. Subramaniam: It is for that purpose that we have the Agricultural Price Commission; they are going into the parity of prices between foodgrains and non-foodgrains and the agricultural and the non-agricultural prices.

श्री हुकम चन्द कछवाय : मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या यह बात सही है कि सरकार द्वारा वैसे ही जबर्दस्ती यह सब कुछ किया गया फिर भी बड़े बड़े नगरों के अन्दर पर्याप्त मात्रा में खाद्य पदार्थ नहीं पहुँचाया गया। इस समय जो मूल्य सरते करने की योजना है सरकार को वह इस लिये है कि काश्तकारों को कम पैसा मिले।

Shri C. Subramaniam: That is a general question. Where there is a shortfall, we are trying to supply as much as possible from the Central stocks.

श्री भागवत झा झाजाद : सरकार ने दाम कम करने के लिये अभी जिन चार उपायों का हवाला दिया है उन उपायों को करने के बाद भी क्या बहुत सी चीजों के दामों में वृद्धि हो गई बजाय घटने के, उदाहरणार्थ उस घी के दाम जो कि सरकार स्वयं देती है ससद भवन के काउंटर पर। इस के क्या कारण हैं।

Shri C. Subramaniam: In the recent past, prices are coming down.

Shrimati Savitri Nigam: The hon. Minister mentioned just now that the prices of edible oils and mustard oil are coming down. In view of the fact that the price had gone up as high as 104.7 per cent., what has

been the accurate decrease in the price of these edible oils?

Shri C. Subramaniam: I cannot give the exact price which prevails at present. If the hon. Member is interested, I shall enquire and let her know.

श्री विभूति मिश्र : मांग और पूर्ति के नियम को देखते हुए, चाहे उन चीजों का किसान को जरूरत पड़ती हो या जिन चीजों को किसान को बेचना पड़ता हो, क्या सरकार ने धान, चावल, तिलहन और अन्य चीजों के, जो किसान पैदा करता है, किसान को उचित मूल्य दिलवाने के लिए विचार किया है?

Shri C. Subramaniam: Yes; it is for the purpose of ensuring a fair price to the producer, the farmer, that we have appointed the Agricultural Price Commission, and I hope their recommendations would be fair enough for the producers.

Shri Himmatsinghji: Restrictions on the free movement of foodgrains were put to curb the upward trend in and the rise of prices, but events proved to the contrary, and therefore, I would like to know to what extent the restriction imposed by the Central Government and the various State Governments on the free movement of foodgrains was responsible for the rise in prices?

Shri C. Subramaniam: As hon. Members are aware, as far as rice is concerned, we have introduced the zonal system from State to State for the purpose of getting at the stocks for building up a buffer-stock. As far as the price of rice is concerned, we cannot say it is out of control. As a matter of fact, more or less the maximum prices that are fixed are the ruling prices in most of the States. There might be a few pockets here and there, where, because of the scarcity, the prices might have gone up. As far as wheat is concerned,

the whole question is under consideration, and we are hoping to take a decision within the next two or three weeks.

Shri Kapur Singh: What are the real causes for the shockingly high rise of prices in the matter of pulses and mustard oil—63·7 and 104·7 per cent respectively?

Shri C. Subramaniam: Decrease in production.

श्री जगदेव सिंह सिद्धान्ती : यह बात सब देशी घी खाने वाले जानते हैं कि गाय और भैंस के दूध से पैदा होने वाले घी की कीमतें बढ़ी हैं। क्या इसका कारण यह नहीं है कि गाय और भैंस के कत्ल पर सरकार की ओर से कोई पाबन्दी नहीं है ?

Shri C. Subramaniam: Various reasons can be adduced, but during the last year, there was less of production of milk throughout the country and that is why the ghee prices have gone up. Unfortunately, last year seems to have been a very extraordinary year in regard to production; in every sector there was less production.

Shrimati Ramdulari Sinha: May I know why the Government's measures have been ineffective in holding the price-line?

Shri C. Subramaniam: It is a major question. I am sure the hon. Finance Minister will deal with this question in the budget debate.

Shri D. J. Nalk: May I know whether there are any representatives of the agriculturists on the Agricultural Foodgrains Price Commission which has been just now set up?

Shri C. Subramaniam: No, Sir. We have not filled up all the places in the Agricultural Price Commission; we are considering that aspect.

Kharif Crops

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{ Shri Yashpal Singh:
 Shri M. L. Dwivedi:
 Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad:
 Shri Naval Prabhakar:
 Shri D. N. Tiwary:
 *199. { Shri Subodh Hansda:
 Shri S. C. Samanta:
 Shri Bibhuti Mishra:
 Shri K. N. Tiwary:
 Shri Ram Sewak Yadav:
 Shri P. C. Borooah:
 Shri P. R. Chakraverti:

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

(a) whether Government are in a position to indicate the latest figures about the production of rice and other cereals during the last Kharif season; and

(b) how do these compare with the corresponding figures for the last year?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): (a) and (b). Firm estimates of production of rice and other Kharif cereals have not yet been furnished by the States. However, indications are that the production of rice may be around 38·5 million tonnes as compared to 36·5 million tonnes in 1963-64; that the production of other kharif cereals may be higher than last year's by a million tonnes.

श्री यशपाल सिंह: क्या सरकार यह बतला सकती है कि जब कि आंकड़ों के अनुसार पैदावार बढ़ी है तो क्या कारण है कि चीजों के दाम चढ़ गए हैं ?

श्री शाहनवाज़ खाँ : माननीय सदस्य को पता है कि इसके कई कारण हैं। कुछ तो ऐसा खयाल है कि कुछ लोग होरडिंग कर रहे हैं। कुछ लोग कहते हैं कि किसान माल को मंडी में नहीं ला रहा है।