

LOK SABHA DEBATES

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LOK SABHA

Tuesday, November 30, 1965/Agrahayana 9, 1887 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Rise in Prices of Foodgrains

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- *536. Shri Yashpal Singh:
Shri S. M. Banerjee:
Shri Shree Narayan Das:
Shri Ram Sewak Yadav:
Shri Madhu Limaye:
Shri Bagri:
Shri P. K. Deo:
Shri Solanki:
Shri Kapur Singh:
Shri Yogendra Jha:
Shri Gulshan:
Shri D. C. Sharma:

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

(a) whether the prices of foodgrains have been rising since the out-break of the present conflict with Pakistan;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the action being taken to arrest the rise?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Shri D. B. Chavan): (a) It is not correct to say that the prices of foodgrains have been rising since the outbreak of the present conflict with Pakistan. On the other hand, the prices of foodgrains registered a decline from end of August till the end of October.

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(b) Does not arise.

(c) Does not arise.

श्री यशपाल सिंह : क्या मैं जान सकता हूँ कि दोनों में से कौन सी बात हुई है ? हमारे रुपये की कीमत कम हुई है या घनाज की कीमत बढ़ी न, दोनों में से कौन सा काम हुआ है ?

Shri D. B. Chavan: The question is about the decline in prices, I have stated that from the end of August till the end of October there was a decline everywhere so far as prices were concerned. As for the question whether it is on account of the value of the rupee going down, maybe it is on account of that also.

Mr. Speaker: If the value has declined, the prices must go up.

Shri Shinkre: He said "also". Which are the other reasons?

श्री यशपाल सिंह : क्या सरकार यह बतला सकती है जैसे मिल मालिकान के माल की कीमत अगर दस साल बाद भी बढ़ती है तो मिल मालिकान को उसका मुनाफा मिलता है तो सरकार इस तरह का कोई घासबासन दे सकती है कि किसान से जो गेहूँ 14 रुपये मन लिया गया था वह 32 रुपये मन बिक रहा है तो क्या उसका मुनाफा किसान को मिलेगा ?

अध्यक्ष महोदय : यह कैसे हो सकता है ?

श्री बागड़ी : यह हो सकता है . . .

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आपको किसने बुलाया ?

श्री बागड़ी : आपने एक चीकी जवाब दिया उस पर मैं कहता हूँ कि यह हो सकता है ।

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri C. Subramaniam): The assessment is not correct that the wheat purchased at Rs. 14 is being sold at Rs. 32.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: I would like to know whether the Minister is aware of the fact that in the open market in U.P., Madhya Pradesh, Bengal, Rajasthan etc., prices of both rice and wheat have abnormally risen, and rice is being sold at Rs. 3 in West Bengal and Rs. 3 in the black market in Madhya Pradesh where it is not available. I would like to know what steps Government contemplate to take to check the rise in prices in the open market.

Shri C. Subramaniam: We will be discussing the food situation tomorrow. It will not be possible for me at question time to enumerate all the steps that we are taking for this purpose.

Mr. Speaker: All these reasons cannot be given now.

श्री बागड़ी : प्रध्यक्ष महोदय, बहस एक बात है और सवाल का जवाब दूसरी बात है ।

Shri M. L. Dwivedi: These questions were tabled one month back. If a debate is to take place tomorrow, it does not mean that he should not give the reasons now.

Shri P. K. Deo: It will help the discussion tomorrow.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: I tabled a Calling Attention Notice enclosing telegrams from Madhya Pradesh, from places like Katni and Khamaria where rice is not available at all. You disallowed it on the ground that we are having a discussion. If we get some reply, that will help us in the discussion tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker: Why should he anticipate... (Interruptions).

Shri C. Subramaniam: May I point out that the question is with regard to rise in the prices of foodgrains since the outbreak of the conflict. I have stated that that is not correct. I do agree that there are other factors, which we will discuss tomorrow, and we will have an opportunity to explain the steps that we are taking.

Shri Shree Narayan Das: The hon. Minister stated that there has been a decline in the prices of foodgrains. I would like to know the extent of decline. What was the position during the same period last year with regard to prices?

Shri D. R. Chavan: The position is like this. In August—October, 1965 the all-India index of wholesale prices of cereals fell from 152 to 148, wheat from 144 to 138, gram from 166 to 159 and pulses from 171 to 160.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: That is all on paper.

Shri D. R. Chavan: Let me read this out first. The decline in gram prices during August—October 1965 was an unusual feature. As compared with the prices in the last year I may say that the index number of wholesale price of rice for August 1965 was 142 as compared with 146 in the last year. With regard to wheat it was 144 in 1965 as compared to 124 for August 1964.

Mr. Speaker: He has to address me.

Shri D. R. Chavan: As regards jowar it was 198 in the month of August as against 180 last year. These are the prices.

श्री मधु सिन्घवे प्रध्यक्ष महोदय, नायब वजीर ने अभी फरमाया कि अगस्त सितम्बर के बाद अनाज के दाम गिर रहे हैं, बढ़ नहीं रहे हैं लेकिन हमारे पास खबरें आती हैं, पत्र आते हैं, तार आते हैं

कि गेहूँ 2 रुपये से ढाई रुपये तक और चावल ढाई रुपये से लेकर 3 रुपये तक बिक रहा है। उन्होंने जो इन्डेक्स की बात कही, उसके सम्बन्ध में मैं जाना चाहता हूँ कि क्या सरकार को इस बात का पता है कि एक दफा बम्बई में और अहमदाबाद में हमने साबित किया है कि इनके कास्ट प्राइस लिमिटेड इन्डेक्स और दूसरे इन्डेक्स झूठे होते हैं, गलत होते हैं और जीवन में जो अनुभव हमें आता है उसका और इन्डेक्स नम्बर का कोई तात्लुक नहीं रहता है, एक बात और...

अध्यक्ष महोदय : बस, एक ही बात का जवाब हो जाने दीजिए

श्री मधु लिमये : वही बात कह रहा हूँ, क्या प्रकालप्रस्त क्षेत्र में मन्ते प्रनाज का इन्तजाम किया जायेगा ?

अध्यक्ष महोदय : केवल पहले भाग का जवाब प्रायेगा ।

Shri C. Subramaniam : We have a machinery to collect the figures with regard to the market prices in recognised markets. It is on that basis that we collect these figures and publish it.

श्री मधु लिमये : रिटेल है या होलसेल ? (व्यवधान) दाम फुटकर है या थोक, यह कहें ।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : क्या मैं और प्राइस बोर्दों कुछ गले से पकड़कर जवाब निकाल सकते हैं ? आखिर, उनको जवाब देना है ।... (व्यवधान) जब बहस होगी तो साबित कीजिएगा कि सही है या गलत लेकिन इस समय जब वह जवाब दे रहे हैं तो उनको रोक रहे हैं...

श्री मधु लिमये : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं ने यह जानना चाहा कि वह कौन से दाम की बात कर रहे हैं, रिटेल या होलसेल ?

अध्यक्ष महोदय : प्राइस सुनिये ।

Shri C. Subramaniam : It is wholesale price.

Mr. Speaker : What they say is that the prices that are given by the government have no relation to the real prices that prevail in the market at which the people in fact get these things.

Shri C. Subramaniam : I do not think it is correct. We get the figures from the market and publish them.

श्री मधु लिमये : होलसेल प्राइस ही ने कहा । अब मैं एक चीज पूछता हूँ वह दूसरा जवाब देते हैं । अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं प्राइस का संरक्षण चाहता हूँ । मैंने रिटेल के बारे में पूछा वह तो होलसेल के बारे में जवाब दे रहे हैं । ग्राहक लोग जो हैं वह फुटकर में खरीदते हैं या थोक में ?

अध्यक्ष महोदय : अब मैं क्या कर सकता हूँ ?

श्री बागड़ी : मैं यह कह रहा था. (व्यवधान) मैं सवाल करूँ, मेरा क्वेश्चन था या जब मेरा नाम लेंगे तब... (व्यवधान) तो मैं मन्त्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहूँगा कि देश के अन्दर...

Shri K. N. Tiwary : On a point of order, Sir. Has he got a licence to get up everytime? (Interruptions).

An hon. Member : You are a licence holder.

श्री बागड़ी : यह लाइसेंस इनको मिला हुआ है ? मेरा सवाल था...

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आइए । बँड जाइए । मैंने प्राइसको बुलाया था, अगर प्राइस नहीं करते तो मैं क्या कर सकता हूँ । बँड आइए, फिर अगर जरूरत होगी तो मैं बुला लूँगा ।

Shri P. K. Deo : Especially in the Chattisgarh division of Madhya Pradesh and in the western districts of my State, Orissa, we are getting grim reports that no rice is available in

the market and that whatever broken rice is available in the market, it is not fit for human consumption and it produces a foul smell, and even to buy those foodgrains—

Mr. Speaker: What is the question?

Shri P. K. Deo: All right, the first part of my question may be answered,—whether it is not a fact.

Shri C. Subramaniam: It is true that Chattisgarh and the adjoining areas have been greatly affected because of the monsoon failure, and the Madhya Pradesh Government is doing its best to manage the situation there.

Shri Kapur Singh: Have Government set up some automatic administrative machinery to stabilise the foodgrain prices in the market, and if not, do they propose to do so soon?

Shri C. Subramaniam: I am not yet aware of any automatic machinery which can bring the prices down or push the prices up. If the hon. Member has got any suggestion in that regard, I am prepared to consider it.

Shri Kapur Singh: It is frivolous. I merely asked whether there was any automatic administrative machinery which acts automatically according to the changing conditions. I protest against his remarks. He implies that I am casting some aspersion on the human aspect of administration. I merely wanted to know whether any automatic administrative machinery has been set up. The human aspect is a different matter altogether. I was not referring to his personality as a human being.

Shri D. C. Sharma: May I know whether the Government is aware of the fact that the wholesale prices that are quoted in the mandies on the basis of which the Government compiles those index figures are different from the open market prices in the cities and villages, and they are different from the black market prices

that are prevalent not only in the cities but also in the villages, and may I know what the Government is doing or is going to do to see to it that the wholesale price index to which the hon. Deputy Minister referred, corresponds to the open market prices in the villages and the cities and eliminate the black market altogether?

Shri Nath Pal: Sir, have you suspended your famous one-minute rule for the time being at least?

Mr. Speaker: Sometimes there is a lapse on my part.

Shri C. Subramaniam: The wholesale prices are the open market prices, and the retail prices have always a relation to the wholesale market prices. Therefore, while we give the wholesale prices, it is in the open market, and I do agree that in some out-of-the-way places the retail prices may be much more, but the general guidance has to be taken from the open, wholesale market prices alone.

श्री बागड़ी : क्या सरकार को इस बात का भी पता है कि उनकी जिस कीमत के बारे में इल्म है उसके अलावा एक दूसरी कीमत भी इस देश में चलती है अकाल पीड़ित क्षेत्रों में जैसे पंजाब में, राजस्थान में, मध्य प्रदेश में आदि, जहाँ गंदुम 30 और 32 रुपये मन बिकता है। क्या सरकार के सामने इस प्रकार के धाँकड़े आए हैं कि इस प्रकार की महँगी चल रही है? अगर आए हैं तो उनकी रोकथाम के लिए उस अकालपीड़ित क्षेत्र में सरकार कोई प्रबन्ध कर रही है?

Shri C. Subramaniam: I do agree that because of the failure of the monsoon in particular areas, there is now a scarcity condition, and because of that prices also are likely to rise. We are trying to tackle the problem, but it is a very difficult problem about which I am sure we will have a detailed discussion tomorrow, and the hon. Members also will be making

their suggestions, and I will also be putting forward what positive steps we are taking in that direction.

Mr. Speaker: Next question.

श्री बागड़ी : मेरा सवाल था कि सरकार क्या कार्रवाई कर रहा है। मेरा प्रश्न है कि अब तक सरकार ने क्या किया है यह बताया जाए।

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy: Sir, I rise to a point of order. This question—question No. 537—should not have been admitted in the House, because it contains defamatory passages and insinuations. If you look at part (c) of the question, you will find that the last portion reads like this: "...and allotted it to a breakaway group styling itself as the PSP". Now, I would beg of you to consider this: if I had put a question that "the corrupted Home Minister has no right to reply like this", will it be quite in order? This may be the opinion of some people. A rump which calls itself the S.S.P. may think that a well-established and recognised political party, according to them, is a break-away group. The S.S.P. have not been recognised as a party and therefore this symbol has been taken away from them. How can the office admit a question like this to be put? I think the question should have been disallowed and not admitted at all. You should rule that this question is out of order.

श्री मधु सिन्घे : एक बात है। मेरी बात सुनने के बाद...

अध्यक्ष महोदय : नहीं, मुझे जरूरत महसूस नहीं होती।

So far as part (a) is concerned, it seeks some information and I do not think there is anything objectionable. So far as part (b) is concerned, that also seeks some information and is not objectionable. But about part (c), it says:

"whether it is also a fact that recently the Commission withdrew the symbol from the SSP and allotted it to a breakaway group styling itself as the PSP."

When I was looking at this in the morning I also entertained some doubts about this, whether this portion "breakaway group styling itself as the PSP" should have been allowed to remain there or not. Then I thought the Minister would give that answer in a suitable manner that the Election Commission has considered this matter, that PSP is already a party that is there having one symbol, etc. I thought the Minister would give a suitable answer.

Shri Nath Pal: I bow down to your ruling, Sir. But may I point out in all humility—the reply will confine itself to facts—but under the rules of procedure, rule 41(III) clearly lays down:

"it shall not contain arguments, inferences, ironical expressions, imputations, epithets or defamatory statements?"

This is very mandatory and the office has been remiss in admitting such epithets. I look forward to the reply, which will be based on the facts. But the very admission of the question is wrong.

Mr. Speaker: I have already expressed my opinion.

Shri Nath Pal: I can give very many epithets right here.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Where is the senior Minister? What is he doing?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Law (Shri Jaganatha Rao): I am here to reply.

श्री मधु सिन्घे : अध्यक्ष महोदय, दो सदस्यों को वापस बुला। मेरी बात भी वापस बुलानी है।

में ने इस शब्द का प्रयोग केवल कानूनी दृष्टि से किया है। दोनों के द्वारा यह कहा गया कि एकीकरण हो चुका है, एक नया दल बन चुका है। जब बन जाता है तो (व्यवस्था) प्राप्त हो रहे थे तो मैं ने आपको सुना।

जब उनके द्वारा भी और पुराने समाजवादी दल के द्वारा यह कहा गया कि एकीकरण हो चुका है, नये दल का निर्माण हुआ है और नये दल को यह झोंपड़ा निशानी मिलनी चाहिए। यह मेरी बात मैं नहीं कह रहा हूँ। पुराने समाजवादी दल और प्रजासमाजवादी दल द्वारा यह इलेक्शन कमीशन को लिखा गया था। जब बनारस में सम्मेलन हुआ तो उसमें से कुछ लोग भ्रमण हो गए। पुराने जो समाजवादी दल के चेयरमन थे वह नए दल के छात्र भी चेयरमन हैं। इसलिए "ब्रेक अवे" ग्रुप का सवाल घाता है। पूरे के पूरे भ्रमण हो जाते तो मैं "ब्रेक अवे" न कहता।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : अब मुझे सुनने दीजिए।

Shri Shree Narayan Das: The answers to parts (a) and (b) are already available. Why was this question admitted?

Mr. Speaker: Let us hear the Minister's reply.

Election Symbol 'Hut'

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*537. **Shri Madhu Limaye:**
Shri Bagri:

Will the Minister of Law be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that on the formation of the S.S.P. in 1964, the Election Commission had allotted the symbol "Hut" to that party;

(b) whether it is a fact that the S.S.P. contested two Parliamentary bye-elections in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, two Assembly bye-elections in Rajasthan and Assam and a general election in Kerala in 1964-65 and pol-

led, with "hut" as symbol, more votes than were necessary for recognition for allotment of symbols;

(c) whether it is also a fact that recently the Commission withdrew the symbol from the SSP and allotted it to a breakaway group styling itself as the PSP; and

(d) if so, the reasons for this decision and the reaction of Government thereto?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Law (Shri Jaganatha Rao):
(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The S.S.P. contested one parliamentary bye-election in Uttar Pradesh, two parliamentary bye-elections in Bihar, one assembly bye-election in Assam and none in Rajasthan, with the hut symbol allotted to its candidates. In these bye-elections the S.S.P. candidates polled between 30% and 60% of the valid votes. In the mid-term general election held in Kerala the S. S. P. candidates with the hut as their symbol polled 8.13% of the total valid votes polled in the State.

(c) and (d). Yes; Sir. The revived Praja Socialist Party's claim to get back its old symbol was stronger than the Samyukta Socialist Party's claim to retain it for the reasons—

(i) The revised Praja Socialist Party is practically the same party under almost the same leadership as before and is entitled to be treated on that footing instead of being treated as a new party.

(ii) The Praja Socialist Party has been having the 'Hut' symbol for the last 12 years.

(iii) Apart from the recent General Election in Kerala only four bye-elections have been contested by the Samyukta Socialist Party with the election symbol 'Hut'.

श्री मधु लिमये : क्या यह बात सही है कि पुराने समाजवादी दल और पुराने प्रजा