

LOK SABHA

Tuesday, August 23, 1960/Bhadra 1,
1882 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Statutory Board for Prices of Agri-
cultural Commodities

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*652. { Shri Ram Krishan Gupta:
Shri D. C. Sharma:
Shri Ajit Singh Sarhadi:
Shri Braj Raj Singh:

Will the Minister of Food and Agri-
culture be pleased to refer to the
reply given to Starred Question No.
1038 on the 23rd March, 1960 and
state at what stage is the scheme to
constitute a statutory board to fix
prices of all crops including sugar-
cane?

The Deputy Minister of Agriculture
(Shri M. V. Krishnappa): No decision
has yet been arrived at in this mat-
ter.

Shri Ram Krishan Gupta: May I
know whether the scheme has been
approved by the Planning Commis-
sion? If so, what are the main fea-
tures of the approved scheme?

**The Minister of Food and Agricul-
ture (Shri S. K. Patil):** I do not say
it has yet been finally approved. But,
we are thinking of having an Agri-
cultural Commodities Advisory Com-
mittee—a slight change in the name
and the commodities too—which would
be in a position to advise Government
not only on price policy but also on
all matters having a bearing on the
programme of agricultural production.

This should necessarily be a com-
mittee of officials of the concerned
Ministries plus the Planning Com-
mission, the Reserve Bank and things
like that. This is exactly what is
being done; but, I would not say it
is yet final 100 per cent.

Shri Ram Krishan Gupta: May I
know whether there is a difference of
view between the Planning Com-
mission and the Ministry concerned
regarding this, and whether it is the
main cause of delay?

Shri S. K. Patil: There is always a
difference between any two indivi-
duals too. But the purpose of the
Planning Commission and the com-
mittee is that we should bridge this
difference as far as possible and come
to what is known as a composite gov-
ernment mind which we shall very
soon come to.

Shri D. C. Sharma: May I know if
with this Agricultural Commodities
Advisory Committee, no non-official
producers and no non-official distri-
butors of these agricultural commodi-
ties will be associated?

Shri S. K. Patil: My original idea
has now been split up into two. One
would be the Agricultural Commodi-
ties Advisory Committee composed of
officials of those ministries etc. speci-
ally with a full-time Chairman—a
complete body. Another will be the
Farmers Advisory Panel on which
other people also would be taken so
that the two working together and in
consultation with each other would
arrive at the same thing which was
the original plan.

Shri Ajit Singh Sarhadi: May I
just ask if there has been any investi-
gation or economic survey to come to
a finding as to at what value the
farmer produces the agricultural
products or food? Has that taken
place yet?

Shri S. K. Patil: The hon. Member has just taken the words out of my mouth. It is precisely for that purpose that these committees are intended.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: May I remind the hon. Minister that previously he had in mind a separate Statutory body composed of the representatives of the farmers etc. specially formed to take decisions with regard to the fixation of prices of agricultural commodities? Is it the pressure of the Planning Commission only which has compelled the Minister to split the thing into two and have a panel of farmers, that too only in an advisory capacity and nothing more, where no representatives of the others shall be there?

Shri S. K. Patil: I do not think any influence has compelled me. I am not easily amenable to influences.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: You seem to be.

Shri S. K. Patil: But, what I am saying is this. In any event, the whole thing is bound to be advisory. Now, what we have done is this. The permanent board that is going to be there would be composed of the Ministries and their advisers etc. The other, which is an advisory board of the farmers, would also meet, according to the present plan, every 3 months and do the work. Therefore, both, put together, almost bring the same thing. Let us not quarrel on mere words. We are concerned about what is going to be the consequence. The consequence is going to be, according to me, good.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: May I know whether it is a fact that the Planning Commission recommended to the Government that if such a statutory body of the farmers of India were formed, the Planning Commission and Government shall be under the constant pressure of the farmers to increase the farmers' prices of the commodities? If it is a fact, how do Government reconcile themselves with

respect to the prices of commodities to be paid to the agriculturists?

Shri S. K. Patil: The hon. Member is under the impression that the main purpose of this Committee is as if to fix the prices. That is one of the many things. We want the whole of agricultural production to be under constant review. That would mean the pattern of Agriculture, the distribution of available land for certain crops, the claims of competing crops to be settled and many things. Price is only one of them. It is but natural that when there are farmers there will be a pressure from their side to increase the prices. It is very normal. There is nothing wrong about it. But we are saying that this should be done in the larger national interests. These two forces put together will give us all that we need in order that the whole basis of agricultural production should be under review.

Shri Ramanathan Chettiar: May I know whether representatives of the State Governments would be appointed to the proposed statutory board?

Shri S. K. Patil: Possibly on the second thing and not on the first, because the first is going to be a full-time Board. Therefore, the State representatives on that would not be good. But, on the Farmers' Advisory Panel, we want not only the representatives of the States but also others, some independent people, economists and men of that type so that they may meet occasionally. They would not meet from day to day as the first thing will do.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: The original idea was to have a statutory board on which non-officials were to be represented. May I know what are the objections which have been raised against non-officials being represented on this statutory board? What are the reasons for not having such a board?

Shri S. K. Patil: As I have explained, because this is not yet final, I cannot give the final picture. It has

yet to emerge in its final form. But I was telling the House that the first Board is going to be a continuous board and that it is not a board that sits once in two months or once in three months. Just like the Tariff Board or something like that, it will be continuously sitting. So, the representatives of the States and the non-officials, whose co-operation can be taken only occasionally, will not be on this board. They will be members of the other board; and they would be consulted, I believe, from time to time.

Shri Ranga: May I know whether it is the intention of Government to see that the second board, the Advisory Panel consisting of non-officials and so on will not be filled up by a majority representing only the State Governments and their nominees? But, on the other hand, will Government endeavour to see that genuine representatives of the farmers are taken in such numbers that they constitute a majority?

Shri S. K. Patil: I am thoroughly of the view that no agricultural production in this country will increase unless the farmers are taken into the fullest confidence. That being so, it shall be my endeavour to see that this committee is not merely of officials. Then, there is no use having such a committee. Therefore, I am making this division purposely because that will give opportunities to the second Board to be a really consultative body and their consultation would be really useful to the other body and their advice really acceptable.

श्री शंकर लाल बरार : मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो बोर्ड बनाया जायेगा, और जो कीमत निर्धारित करेगा, वह कौन सी बातें ध्यान में रखेगा, जिनके आधार पर कीमत मुकर्रर की जायेगी और जो कीमत मुकर्रर की जायेगी, चाहे सब चीजों में नहीं, जो कि किसान उत्पादन करते हैं, लेकिन कम से कम गेहूँ, चावल और खाद्यान्नों की कीमत की गारण्टी सरकार की तरफ से होगी, जैसी कि

यू० के० में है, कि अगर वह कीमत नहीं मिलेगी, तो सरकार उसकी पूर्ति करेगी।

श्री ल० का० पटेल : उसका ज्ञान न मुझे है और न गवर्नमेंट को है। उसी के लिये तो कमेटी बन रही है। वह कमेटी एक्सपर्ट्स की बन रही है, जो कि गवर्नमेंट को एडवाइस दे कि इस बारे में क्या करना चाहिये।

श्री खुशबक्त राय : क्या मैं जान सकता हूँ कि पहले जो यह विचार था कि जो कमेटी बनेगी, उसको स्टैचुटरी रेकग्नीशन दी जायेगी, अब वह इरादा क्यों बदल दिया गया है ?

श्री ल० का० पटेल : क्योंकि मैंने माना है कि अब जो तरीका निकाला गया है, वह अच्छा है पहले से।

Shri Tangamani: May I know whether this Agricultural Commodities Advisory Committee will also fix the prices of cash crops in addition to sugarcane like groundnuts etc? If so, has the list of cash crops been made out?

Shri S. K. Patil: It is exactly the idea. The whole range of the cash crops, the whole range of the food crops—of the total value of nothing less than Rs. 3,000 crores annually—is the biggest task and the most difficult task. Therefore, the Committee is appointed so that the claims of these crops—not only between the cash crops and the food crops but even among the food crops and the cash crops—should be so adjusted that by that process we shall get the best results out of them.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: In view of the fact that the formation of the committee and the finalisation of prices will take sometime, what positive steps have been taken to hold the prices at present?

Shri S. K. Patil: I am not very competent to understand what is the meaning of holding the prices. A

discussion would be there in Parliament. But so far as the farmers are concerned, the prices have got to be held, more than even for the consumers.

पोस्टकार्ड

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*६५३. { श्री नरदेव स्नातक :
श्री भक्त दर्शन :

क्या परिवहन तथा संचार मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि जिस कागज पर पोस्टकार्ड छापे जाते हैं वह बहुत घटिया किस्म का होता है ;

(ख) पोस्टकार्ड का कागज कहां-कहां बनता है और उन कारखानों में कितने कर्मचारी काम करते हैं ; और

(ग) क्या पोस्टकार्ड छापने से पहले यह देखने के लिये समुचित प्रयोग किये जाते हैं कि कहीं उस पर स्याही तो नहीं फैलती ?

परिवहन तथा संचार मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री राज बहादुर) : (क) जी नहीं ।

(ख) पोस्टकार्ड का कागज मैसर्स टीटागढ़ पेपर मिल्स कम्पनी लिमिटेड, कलकत्ता द्वारा बनाकर सप्लाई किया जाता है । उक्त कारखाने में काम करने वाले कर्मचारियों की संख्या के बारे में सूचना उपलब्ध नहीं है ।

(ग) जी हां । खराब बने पोस्टकार्ड के कागजों को सामान्य स्थिति में छापने से पहले निकाल दिया जाता है ।

श्री नरदेव स्नातक : क्या माननीय मंत्री जी यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि जिन पोस्टकार्डों पर लिखते समय स्याही फैल जाती है उस खराबी को दूर करने के लिये क्या उपाय किया जा रहा है ?

श्री राज बहादुर : जैसा कि कहा गया है, कागज छांट कर लिया जाता है और बहुत

अहतियात बरती जाती है । अक्सर होता यह है कि पोस्टकार्डों को ऐसी जगह रख दिया जाता है जहां सीलन वगैरह होती है । अगर सीलन की जगह में किसी कागज को रखा जायेगा, तो वह चाहे कितना बढ़िया हो उस पर स्याही फैल जायेगी ।

श्री नरदेव स्नातक : क्या माननीय मंत्री जी यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि जो वर्तमान समय में कार्ड की साइज है उसको कुछ बढ़ाने का विचार है ?

श्री राज बहादुर : मेरी जानकारी में तो ऐसा कोई विचार नहीं है ।

Shrimati Ila Palchoudhuri: May I know whether Government is aware that sometimes this complaint results from paper that is old which is supplied for this purpose? Will the Government look into it that the paper that is being supplied is not very old because it is only then that the ink spreads?

The Minister of Transport and Communications (Dr. P. Subbarayan): I have examined this question. The paper is supplied by the Titagur Paper Mills Co. Ltd. I do not think the hon. lady Member is correct in saying that the paper is old. The department takes care to get the best they can. Considering that we are using only indigenous materials, we get the best we can possibly get. Two other paper mills were asked to tender for this and their tenders were not satisfactory.

श्री भक्त दर्शन : माननीय मंत्री जी, श्री राज बहादुर जी ने मुख्य प्रश्न का उत्तर देते हुये कहा—जी नहीं । मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि यह जो सीलन की शिकायत है यह कुछ दिनों से ही क्यों ज्यादा होने लगी है ?

श्री राज बहादुर : यह कागज तो बराबर इस्तेमाल होता रहा है पर कभी ऐसी शिकायत नहीं आयी । बीस बरस से पोस्टकार्डों के लिये यह कागज इस्तेमाल हो रहा है, और बीस बरस से यही फैक्टरी कागज सप्लाई कर रही