

Mr. Speaker: Shall I allow Members to put questions relating to every part of India? As soon as he gets all the necessary information, the hon. Minister will kindly lay a statement on the Table of the House.

Dr. P. Subbarayan: I will be quite prepared to do that but I may point out that the answer itself contains what is being proposed to be done.

श्री प्रकाश वीर शास्त्री : माननीय मंत्री जी के वक्तव्य से ऐसा प्रतीत होता है कि दिल्ली के ग्रास-पास जितने नगर हैं, जैसे गाज़ियाबाद और शाहदरा आदि, उन सब के साथ दिल्ली से सीवी टेलीफोन सर्विस जारी करने का सरकार का इरादा है। इस तरीके से क्या फ़रीदाबाद, जो दिल्ली का ही एक प्रकार से भाग है और इंडस्ट्रियल एरिया है, और गुड़गांव से भी दिल्ली के साथ सीवी टेलीफोन सर्विस स्थापित होगी ?

Dr. P. Subbarayan: It is not at present under consideration. Knowing what the hon. Member means and knowing that he is quite right in his presumption, we will try to do what we can but we must finish the lines that we have got on hand before we undertook any new lines.

श्रीमती सहोदराबाई राय : दिल्ली से भोपाल, जबलपुर, और नागपुर तक सीवी ट्रंक-काल सर्विस कब तक लगने वाली है ?

Dr. P. Subbarayan: I am very glad to hear from the hon. lady Member how concerned she is about these direct telephones. These are all things which will have to be considered later not now.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: Along with question No. 500, may I suggest that question No. 518 also may be taken up?

Mr. Speaker: If there is any hon. Member, who has tabled question No. 518 is here, he may put that ques-

tion also. Has the hon. Minister no objection? . . . (Interruptions).

Shri Radha Raman may put that question also.

State Trading in Foodgrains

- +
- *500. {
 Shri Radha Raman:
 Shri Shree Narayan Das:
 Shri Raghunath Singh:
 Shri D. C. Sharma:
 Shri Rajendra Singh:
 Shri Surendranath Dwivedy:
 Shri Ajit Singh Sarhadi:
 Shri Hem Barua:

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

(a) what is the present position with regard to State trading in foodgrains;

(b) whether investigations have been made or are being made to find out more avenues of State trading in foodgrains; and

(c) if so, the result or progress of such investigations?

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. M. Thomas): (a) Purchases of rice, paddy and wheat continued this year in most of the surplus States. During the crop year 1959-60, 8.28 lakh metric tons of rice and 2.28 lakh metric tons of paddy were purchased on account of the Central and State Governments. Out of this year's wheat crop, the State Governments have so far purchased about 3.62 lakh metric tons of wheat.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Fixation of Minimum Prices of Agricultural Commodities

- +
- *518. {
 Shri Radha Raman:
 Shri D. C. Sharma:
 Shri Shree Narayan Das:
 Shri Ram Krishan Gupta:
 Shri Vidya Charan Shukla:
 Shri Rameshwar Tan'ia:
 Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:
 Shri Ajit Singh Sarhadi:

Shri Rami Beddy:
Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:
Shri Indrajit Gupta:
Shri Khimji:
Shri Achar:
Shri Sadhan Gupta:

Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 652 on the 23rd August, 1960 and state the progress of the scheme referred to therein to constitute a Committee/Panel to fix prices of all crops including sugarcane and to consider other allied matters?

The Deputy Minister of Agriculture (Shri M. V. Krishnappa): The matter is still under consideration.

Shri Radha Raman: May I know whether State trading in foodgrains has met with partial or complete success and if so in which States?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri S. K. Patil): It depends upon the conditions existing in the various States. So, far as the present position is concerned, it has become unnecessary.

Shri Radha Raman: Will it be given up?

Shri S. K. Patil: It would not be abandoned; it is a good weapon always to be kept in hand and to be used when necessary.

Shri Nath Pai: May we know the names of States which are in principle opposed to the idea or which are on account of the practical difficulties, opposed to it, for instance, the State of Maharashtra?

Shri S. K. Patil: No body is opposed or nobody is for. As I said it is a weapon to be used when it is necessary. Just at present the only State where it is very partially being done is Punjab but I am not quite sure; they will have to give it up very soon.

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy: Is it not a fact that state trading in foodgrains in Orissa was a success and in spite of the reluctance of the Govern-

ment of Orissa, the food zone was introduced there?

Shri S. K. Patil: This is news to me. Orissa is in difficulty as to how to dispose even the rice they have got at present.

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy: May we know whether it is not a fact that the Government of Orissa wants to dispose of the surplus stock through state trading?

Shri S. K. Patil: It is not state trading; only they have got it and they have to sell it.

Mr. Speaker: They want to know whether the State Trading Corporation will be entrusted with this business.

Shri S. K. Patil: No, Sir; I do not think that it comes in this business.

श्री गोविन्द दास : क्या यह बात सही है कि जब कभी सरकार की खरीद जारी होती है, तो वह ऐसे वक्त जारी होती है जब बहुत सा माल जा चुकता है और भाव बहुत गिर जाते हैं और किसानों को इन खरीदों से कोई खास फायदा नहीं होता है ?

श्री स० का० पाटिल : अच्छा होता कि माननीय सदस्य यह सवाल वहाँ की गवर्नमेंट और चीफ मिनिस्टर से पूछते ।

श्री गोविन्द दास : मैं यह प्रश्न सारे देश के लिये पूछ रहा हूँ, केवल मध्य-प्रदेश के लिये नहीं ।

श्री स० का० पाटिल : उस की जिम्मेदारी मुझ पर नहीं है । वह चीज छः महीने से चल रही है और उस की सारी जिम्मेदारी मध्य प्रदेश गवर्नमेंट पर है ।

Shri Tyagi: Does state trading apply to foreign foodgrains only or does it include foodgrains produced here in India? May we also know the profit or loss during this year on account of state-trading?

Shri S. K. Patil: Those figures are not with me because the States themselves have done it. But so far as I know, Madhya Pradesh stands to lose about Rs. 40 lakhs and I think the loss of Punjab would perhaps be more.

Shri Ajit Singh Sarhadi: May I know whether before the Government has come to the conclusion that state trading is unnecessary it gave weight to the views of the States, particularly that of the Punjab Government that it is absolutely essential to keep the prices of the grains in the State?

Shri S. K. Patil: Government have not come to that conclusion. What I said is that there are circumstances where state-trading becomes unnecessary, as they are to-day. When there is purely a buyers' market, anybody would be unwise to go and buy these things.

Shri Ajit Singh Sarhadi: Have the Government taken into consideration the fact that the Punjab Government had stated that it was absolutely necessary in order to maintain the prices of foodgrains there?

Shri S. K. Patil: There are two things: to maintain the prices for the consumer and to maintain the prices for the farmer. If the Punjab Government is anxious to maintain the prices for the farmers, I can understand that. But so far as the consumers are concerned, they are prejudicially affected by it.

Shri Ajit Singh Sarhadi: My question pertains to the prices for the farmers.

Shri S. K. Patil: I am more anxious than any Government in this country to keep the prices fair to the farmers.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: If it is so, why is there so much delay in the appointment of the committee for fixation of minimum prices of agricultural commodities? It is said, in reply to question No. 518, that the matter is still under consideration. By what time will the committee be appointed?

Shri S. K. Patil: I have often replied to that question on the floor of the House. I never thought of the Minimum Price Fixation Committee. It is the Agricultural Advisory Committee which is very necessary and which is becoming increasingly necessary as the time passes on. But I must not do anything in haste which ultimately may prejudicially affect either the consumer or the grower. Therefore, the matter is under consideration, and in the meanwhile nothing is lost.

Shri Ajit Singh Sarhadi: May I know, Sir....

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. I have already allowed him to put three supplementaries.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: May I know whether the Study Group which was appointed about state trading in foodgrains has submitted its report; if so, what are its recommendations and whether those recommendations have been accepted by the Government?

Shri A. M. Thomas: That was submitted long ago; about two years back.

Mr. Speaker: I want to know whether we had a discussion on the question as to whether so far as foodgrains are concerned the State Trading Corporation ought to undertake the work of distribution etc., or not, because I find again and again there are questions put here on the floor of the House and matters of big policy are being discussed during the Question Hour.

Shri A. M. Thomas: It is not the State Trading Corporation that deals in foodgrains. There is the Director-General's organisation in the Food Ministry which deals with whatever quantity is imported and what is procured internally.

Mr. Speaker: Is there any objection to that kind of trading?

Shri S. K. Patil: The State Trading Corporation has nothing to do with it. What is understood as 'State trading' is where the Central Government or the State Governments do trading themselves, where they either buy or sell foodgrains. That is what is known as 'State trading', and there the State Trading Corporation does not come in.

Shri Nath Pai: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Food Minister said that no State Government is opposed to this idea. Whether they are not opposed or they are not saying so, in practice they are putting the whole scheme in cold-storage. Is he aware of the statement made by the Supply Minister of the Government of Mahatrashtia where he said that the Government of Maharashtra was not going to implement the scheme because the other State Governments on which it depends were not implementing it?

Shri S. K. Patil: No, Sir, because very recently, I remember, he was replying to a question—a few days back—consequent upon the opening of a zone with Madhya Pradesh. It is not necessary, because so far as he is concerned the point that he has to see is that the prices for the consumers do not rise. The prices have fallen down so much just now that he need not take any steps. Naturally, therefore, he gave that reply.

श्री राम सिंह भाई बर्मा : जैसा माननीय मंत्री महोदय ने बतलाया कि मध्य प्रदेश सरकार को ३०, ४० लाख रु० का नुकसान हुआ, तो क्या यह बात सही नहीं है जैसा कि मध्य प्रदेश सरकार की ओर से कहा भी जाता है कि यह नुकसान भारत सरकार की नीति के कारण ही हुआ। जब बम्बई स्टेट को जूरूरत थी, तब उसने वहाँ अनाज नहीं जाने दिया।

Shri S. K. Patil: It is a domestic affair between the State and the Government of India. I did not say that

the loss would be only to the Madhya Pradesh Government. Who has got to suffer that loss is a matter under consideration.

डा० गोविन्द दास : जहाँ तक माननीय मंत्री जी का यह कथन है कि वे इस बात को देख रहे हैं कि किसानों को उन के अनाज का काफी ठीक मूल्य मिले, क्या यह बात सही नहीं है कि मध्य प्रदेश की सरकार ने केन्द्रीय सरकार को बार बार लिखा कि घान और गेहूँ के मूल्य बढ़ाये जायें, और केन्द्रीय सरकार ने इस सम्बन्ध में कुछ नहीं किया?

श्री स० का० पाटिल : यह बात ठीक है। केन्द्रीय सरकार ने इस लिये ऐसा नहीं किया कि वह न केवल किसानों के इंटरेस्ट को ही देखती है, बल्कि जो कंज्युमर्स हैं उनके इंटरेस्ट को भी देखना उस के लिये आवश्यक है क्यों कि इस में सारे आदमियों की तादाद आ जाती है, और मैं मानता हूँ कि भाव बढ़ने से वह चीज नहीं हो सकती है। यह बात ठीक है कि भाव बढ़ने से शायद किसानों को थोड़ा ज्यादा पैसा मिलता, लेकिन उस से न केवल मध्य प्रदेश के किसानों के लिये भाव बढ़ता बल्कि दूसरे भागों के लिये भी बढ़ता, और इससे बहुत ज्यादा अनर्थ पैदा होता।

डा० गोविन्द दास : माननीय मंत्री जी ने एक बात और कही कि भाव काफी घट गये हैं, ऐसी हालत में जब मध्य प्रदेश की सरकार का यह प्रस्ताव है कि घान और गेहूँ के भाव बढ़ें जायें, तो उस से क्या किसानों को लाभ नहीं होगा?

श्री स० का० पाटिल : भाव इस लिये घट गये कि मध्य प्रदेश एक इंडेपेंडेंट जोन था और बिना सरकार की इजाजत के अनाज बाहर नहीं जा सकता था। जब खुल जायेगा तो मैं मानता हूँ कि किसानों को

और ज्यादा पैसा मिलेगा, और मिलना ही चाहिये ।

Shri Ram Krishan Gupta: May I know whether it is a fact that the Punjab Government is selling sugar at much higher rates than the rates in other States in India; if so, the nature of action to be taken in this regard?

Shri S. K. Patil: This is a State matter. The matter has come to my knowledge that there they are selling it at higher rates because they are keeping some margin for themselves. We are very seriously thinking that for the uniformity of prices such practices should not be encouraged.

Shri Tyagi: What is the average cost of procurement per maund?

Shri S. K. Patil: I do not know. It varies. But I would like to give a rough idea. The wheat that was brought for Rs. 14 or Rs. 15 a maund was sold for Rs. 17 a maund. Therefore, the cost must be in between anything from Re. 1 to Rs. 3 per maund. That might also include a margin for a little surplus, call it profit or call it whatever you like.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: May I know whether the Government have considered about the advisability of enquiring into the cost structure of agricultural commodities before they fix the minimum prices for agricultural commodities?

Shri S. K. Patil: The hon. Member is right. That has got to be done before the minimum prices are fixed, and that is the reason why the various departments of the Government have got to come together in order to formulate a homogeneous policy. Therefore, it is taking a little time, but I agree with his suggestion.

Shri A. C. Guha: The hon. Minister has said that the procurement cost per maund of wheat is near about Rs. 2 to Rs. 3. May I ask if the Government has made any enquiry as to why the procurement cost per maund should be so high? They procure in

bulk, and I think the cost should not be more than eight annas a maund.

Shri S. K. Patil: I said that it may be from Re. 1 to Rs. 3. I merely mentioned the buying price of Rs. 14 or Rs. 15 a maund and the selling price of Rs. 17 a maund, which are facts. But the cost does not always depend only on the staff that is employed. The Government have got to borrow loans from the Reserve Bank paying $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest. Loans worth crores of rupees have got to remain undischarged until the money is collected. Besides that, there are storage charges and other charges. All that put together, it amounts to a sum which becomes uneconomical so far as the present market is concerned.

Shri A. C. Guha: In any case, if State trading means that the consumers have to pay Rs. 2 to Rs. 3 more per maund, then I think the Government should consider the whole question anew. Why should the consumers be made to pay such an excessive cost?

Shri S. K. Patil: Now nothing remains to be considered, Sir, because that has disappeared by itself.

World Conference of Lighthouses

*501. **Shri Raghunath Singh:** Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether India participated in the World Conference of Lighthouses held at Washington; and

(b) if so, what are the main decisions of the Conference which affect Indian system of Lighthouses?

The Minister of Transport and Communications (Dr. P. Subbarayan): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha. All the decisions are considered desirable from the viewpoint of India.

STATEMENT

Main decisions of the Sixth International Conference on Lighthouses