

LOK SABHA

Wednesday, the 22nd March, 1961/
Chaitra, 1, 1883 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Fertilizers for Tea Gardens

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*1017. { Shri Rameshwar Tantia:
 { Shri P. C. Borooah:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the tea gardens are experiencing great difficulties in obtaining the required quantity of fertilizers;

(b) what was the shortfall in supply during 1960; and

(c) whether some improvement has since been made?

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table. [See Appendix III, annexure No. 85].

Shri Rameshwar Tantia: The statement shows that ammonium sulphate which is required by the tea gardens has been supplied to the extent of 78 per cent, while ammonium sulphate nitrate has been met to the extent of 150 per cent. May I know whether Government will switch over to the right type of fertilisers for the tea industry which is our biggest foreign exchange earner?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Sulphate of ammonium nitrate is also the right type of fertiliser. It is more used in the South. We try to supply whatever is available to the best of our ability.

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Shri Rameshwar Tantia: May I know whether it is a fact that on account of short supply of fertilisers in 1960 the tea crop has suffered?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: In 1960-61 we could give to South India 70 per cent of their demand and so far as North-East India is concerned one hundred per cent.

Shri P. C. Borooah: May I know whether it is a fact that the total requirement of the tea industry in North-East India was 71,000 tons in 1960 against which only 51,000 tons were supplied and a further reduction of 8½ per cent was made in 1961 requirement?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: As I said, we are in short supply—there is no doubt about it. On the whole, we have given much more priority to the tea gardens than we have given to others.

Shri Abdul Salam: May I know whether Government will agree to a proposal whereby the Association of Tea Planters could import fertilisers and meet the foreign exchange involved by exporting tea over and above the present export?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri S. K. Patil): This is a matter of policy. If that type of transaction is approved of by the Commerce and Industry Ministry and the Finance Ministry, there is no harm. Tea is our best earner of foreign exchange. Therefore to suggest that we shall send tea and take more fertilizers is no solution.

Shri Barman: Is the Ministry aware that whereas sulphate of ammonia is mostly consumed and given to the tea gardens, agricultural areas are not getting any fertilizers whatsoever in certain parts of the country, inspite of the best attempts of the representatives?

Shri S. K. Patil: I do not think that the other agricultural areas are not getting anything. If it is contended that they get less, I admit, because unfortunately the fertilisers have got to be imported. Therefore, limitations of foreign exchange do come in. But this year we are trying to meet even the demands of other agricultural areas to the tune of 90 per cent and possibly in a year or two cent per cent. Therefore, this difficulty would not arise.

Several Hon. Members rose—

Mr. Speaker: I am not going to allow a general discussion on fertilisers. This question is confined to tea. **Shri Tangamani.**

Shri Tangamani: May I know what percentage of the demand of the plantations from the South has been met from indigenous production and what percentage from imported stock? I would like to know what was the demand for ammonium sulphate nitrate which is very much in demand and how much has been supplied.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: I would like to have notice of that question.

Shri P. C. Borooah: I find from the statement that during 1961-62 it is proposed to meet the realistic requirement in terms of nitrogen in full. May I know how this requirement is going to be met.

Shri S. K. Patil: This year we are importing more fertilisers. So far as the demands of the cash crops are concerned, we can give them one hundred per cent. It is good to us even for earning foreign exchange.

Shri K. S. Ramaswamy: Will Government take steps to supply fertilisers in the form of mixtures?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Sometimes State Governments do provide mixtures and sometimes some private firms undertake it.

Shri Chintamani Panigrahi rose—

Mr. Speaker: Is tea grown in Orissa? Next question.

Soil Conservation

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*1018. { **Shri Ram Krishan Gupta:**
Shri Hem Raj:
Shrimati Ila Palchoudhuri:

Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 899 on the 14th December, 1960 and state:

(a) whether Government have considered the report of the team of soil, conservation expert; and

(b) if so, the result thereof?

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) A statement showing the more important recommendations made by Mr. Don A. Williams and the action taken thereon is laid on the Table [See Appendix III, annexure No. 86]

Shri Ram Krishan Gupta: May I know what steps are being taken for coordination of soil survey activities among the various Branches of the Centre and the State Governments as recommended in the report?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: We have been trying our best to coordinate the activities and I think we have achieved quite a great deal of success in this.

Shri Ram Krishan Gupta: It is stated in the report that soil and water programmes must be technical rather than political? May I know what the word "political" signifies?

Mr. Speaker: "Political" is anything other than "technical".

Shri Ram Krishan Gupta: What does the word "political" signify?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: I do not know where the word occurs. I have not been able to spot it.

Shri Tangamani: I find that most of the recommendations—15 in number—have been forwarded to the State Governments for their views. May I know how many State Governments have sent their replies and