

LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Tuesday, December 1, 1998/Agrahayana 10, 1920 (Saka)

*The Lok Sabha met at
Eleven of the Clock*

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

MEMBER SWORN

Shri Mansukhbhai Vasava (Broach)

11.01 Hrs.

OBITUARY REFERENCE

[English]

MR SPEAKER : Hon. Members, I have to inform the House of the sad demise of our colleague, Shri Ghasi Ram Yadav.

Shri Ghasi Ram Yadav was a sitting Member of Lok Sabha representing Alwar Parliamentary Constituency of Rajasthan.

Earlier, Shri Yadav was a Member of Rajasthan Legislative Assembly during 1952-67, 1972-77, 1980-85 and 1990-98.

An active social and political worker, Shri Yadav served his State as a Minister in the Government of Rajasthan during 1966 and 1981-85.

Shri Ghasi Ram Yadav passed away at Jaipur on 30th November, 1998 at the age of 74.

We deeply mourn the loss of this friend and I am sure the House will join me in conveying our condolence to the bereaved family.

The House may now stand in silence for a short while as a mark of respect to the deceased.

11.02 hrs.

The Member then stood in silence for a short while.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Royalty on Natural Gas

*21. DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA : Will the

Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have revised the rate of royalty on Natural Gas for the Block period of 1996-99;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether some proposals have been received from Gujarat in this regard; and

(d) if so, the decision taken thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI VAZHAPADY K. RAMAMURTHY) : (a) to (d) The Government of Gujarat had proposed in January, 1997 that the royalty on Natural Gas be revised upwards from the prevailing level of 10%. Royalty on Natural Gas is paid on advalorem basis. Separately, State Sales Tax is charged on gas by the Government of Gujarat at the rate of 20%, whereas in the case of Crude Oil, the Sales Tax is only 4%. In the context of the overall impact of these separate imposts on the price of gas, there is no proposal to increase the rate of royalty.

Prices of Essential Commodities

*22. SHRI ABHAYSINH S. BHONSLE :

SHRI SHANTILAL PURSHOTTAMDAS PATEL:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a sharp increase in the prices of various edible oils, vegetables, onion, potato, tomato, pulses, spices, salt and other daily need items in recent past;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor, and the percentage of increase in comparison to the last two years;

(c) the present selling rates of these items in the market, Super Bazar and Kendriya Bhandar as compared to the last three preceding years;

(d) the reasons for shortage of these items salt, edible oils, onions and potatoes;

(e) whether the Government propose to ban the export of these items forthwith; and

(f) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to check the price rise and to make these commodities easily available to the consumers at reasonable price ?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SARDAR SURJIT SINGH BARNALA) : (a) and (b) Statement-I showing the percentage variation in wholesale price index numbers as on 14.11.98 in respect of edible oils, vegetables, onion, potato, tomato, pulses, spices, salt and other items for the last two years is enclosed. The main reasons for the increase in prices of these commodities are decline in production due to adverse climatic conditions, gap between demand and supply, decline in import due to high prices and non-availability in international markets, increase in input cost and other seasonal factors.

(c) Details showing comparative retail price of selected essential commodities for the last three years in the open market, Kendriya Bhandar and Super Bazar are given in Statement-II.

(d) There is no shortage of salt in the country. As regards edible oils, there is a demand - supply gap of 12-14 lakh tonnes per annum. Further, there was a decline in the production of oilseeds to the extent of 28 lakh tonnes in 1997-98 resulting in lower production of edible oils. Unfavourable climatic conditions adversely affected the production of rabi and kharif onions and potatoes during 1998 as a result of which the prices of these commodities recorded increase during the last five months. The area under potato and onion cultivation had also declined during 1997-98.

(e) The Government has already banned the export of onions up to 31st January, 1999.

(f) The Government has accorded the highest priority to the control and stabilisation of the prices of essential commodities. Apart from certain long term measures to increase the production of essential goods, imports of items which are in short supply like pulses and onion have been placed under OGL at zero per cent and duty on the import of edible oils has been reduced to 15 per cent from 25 per cent in order to augment the total availability of these items. Some of the essential commodities like rice, wheat, palmolein and kerosene are also supplied through the public distribution at below market prices. Stringent actions are being taken against hoarders, blackmarketeers and others

indulging in unfair trade practices under the Essential Commodities Act and Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act by the State/UT Governments.

Statement-I

Percentage variation in the WPI of selected commodities during the 2 years ending 14.11.98 and 15.11.97

Commodity	Year ending	
	14.11.98	15.11.97
Rice	14.3	2.1
Wheat	15.7	-8.3
Gram	-0.5	20.0
Arhar	90.3	-29.5
Moong	13.9	1.1
Masur	41.3	-27.7
Urad	28.4	-17.4
Potatoes	375.1	-53.7
Onions	298.5	-2.4
Tomatoes	55.0	21.3
Tea	-2.7	60.7
Sugar	-0.2	20.0
Salt	0.7	1.4
Vanaspati	0.3	-0.9
Mustard Oil	80.0	-8.6
Groundnut Oil	26.7	-2.1
Chillies (dry)	30.4	-18.7

Statement-II

Monthend retail prices of selected essential commodities in Delhi in Nov. 98 and last 3 years

(Rs. per kg.)

Commodity	Nov. 98	Nov. 97	Nov.96	Nov. 95
1	2	3	4	5
Rice	11.00	10.00	11.50	9.50
Wheat	7.50	6.50	7.00	5.50

1	2	3	4	5
Grain	20.00	20.00	17.00	15.50
Arhar	41.00	22.00	30.00	31.00
Potatoes	10.00	5.00	10.00	8.00
Onions	24.00	8.00	10.00	10.50
Tea	110.00	92.00	88.00	80.00
Sugar	16.00	16.50	15.00	14.50
Salt	6.00	6.00	5.50	4.50
Vanaspati	52.00	39.00	44.00	42.00
Mustard Oil	76.00	34.00	40.00	39.00
Groundnut Oil	82.00	45.00	50.00	49.00

Source : State Civil Supplies Department

Comparative Statement showing prices of essential commodities for 1998 and last three years in Kendriya Bhandar

(Rs. per kg.)

Sl. No.	Name of the Item	Rates as on			
		1.11.95	1.11.96	1.11.97	1.11.98
1.	Dal Arhar	27.30	26.70	15.70	41.50
2.	Dal chana	10.10	14.90	18.30	17.50
3.	Rice permai	8.20	9.30	9.40	11.20
4.	Atta 10kg. (Agmark)	56.50	71.00	68.00	82.00
5.	Moong Chilka	18.60	18.40	19.20	23.50
6.	Salt (Tata)	4.10	5.40	5.40	5.40
7.	Dalda (Vanaspati)	38.80	35.35	33.70	51.40
8.	Mustard oil (Kanodia)	51.50	50.90	48.00	74.50
9.	Haldi Pdr. (Agmark)*	4.90	7.70	8.90	11.50
10.	Dhania Pdr. (Agmark)*	5.70	11.10	8.50	7.60
11.	Mirch Pdr. (Agmark)*	10.40	11.80	7.30	12.20
12.	Onions				
13.	Potatoes	These are not sold by Kendriya Bhandar			
14.	Tomato				

*Rs Per 200-gm. Source : Kendriya Bhandar

Comparative Statement showing prices of essential commodities for 1998 and last three years in Supar Bazar

(Rs. per kg.)

Sl. No.	Name of the Item	Rates as on			
		30.11.95	30.11.96	30.11.97	30.11.98
1.	Arhar Dal	27.95	29.60	18.70	45.00
2.	Gram Dal	10.10	15.80	20.65	23.00
3.	Rice permai	08.30	09.15	10.35	11.30
4.	Atta (Agmark)**	59.50	65.00	71.50	84.00
5.	Moong Chilka	19.75	19.70	21.95	28.00
6.	Tata Iodized Salt	04.15	05.50	05.50	05.50
7.	Dalda (Vanaspati)	38.85	35.05	35.50	30.40
8.	Mustard Oil (P. Brand)	50.25	50.30	50.30	75.00
9.	Haldi Powder*	05.50	07.25	10.40	11.50
10.	Dhania Powder*	08.25	13.80	12.00	09.25
11.	Red Chilly Pdr.*	17.45	13.10	11.20	16.25
12.	Onion	09.50	08.00	14.00	10.00
13.	Potato	04.50	08.00	4.50	9.30
14.	Tomato	15.90	12.00	07.50	30.00

** Rs. Per 10 Kg.; * Rs. per 200 gm.

Source : Super Bazar.

[Translation]

Exploitation of Women Workers

*23. DR. PRABHA THAKUR : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the wages paid to women workers working in various fields are very low;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether the women working in Bidi industry and handicraft sector and engaged in construction work are exploited today;

(d) if so, the facts thereof; and