

you mean business. Otherwise, it may be too late which I do not want it to be.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH (Aonla): Price situation is so given that it has unsettled Smt. Geeta Mukherjee.

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, the Statement by the Minister.

14.31 hrs.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Fire In Shastri Bhawan on 3.5.1990

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): I wish to apprise the Hon'ble Members of this august House about the incident of fire which took place in Shastri Bhawan on the morning of 3rd May, 1990.

At about 7.00 A.M. a call was received at the Control Room of Delhi Fire Service that a fire had broken out in Shastri Bhawan. Immediately fire fighting vehicles were rushed to the spot from the nearest fire station. Initially, the fire was considered as "serious", but subsequently it was declared "medium". Further reinforcement were rushed to Shastri Bhawan. The fire was brought speedily under control by 8.00 A.M.

36 fire units were engaged in fire-fighting operation and the fire service personnel were successful in controlling the situation. One personnel of the Delhi Fire Service sustained grievous injuries when he fell from the second floor of the building. He has been admitted to Dr. RML Hospital, New Delhi.

The fire is reported to have started from the room in the "F" Wing of the second floor

of Shastri Bhawan Complex where old files, furnitures etc. were kept. The partitions in the room helped in spread of fire and also made fire-fighting more difficult. A case FIR No. 163 u/s 436 IPC has been registered at P.S. Parliament Street.

In view of the number of fires which have broken out in government buildings, I have had discussions with all the authorities concerned. Instructions have been issued to Commissioner of Police, Delhi, to have the cases investigated under the supervision of senior officers in consultation with the other investigation/intelligence agencies.

As the Hon'ble Members are aware, a high level Committee has already been appointed to inquire into the cause of fire at Vigyan Bhawan and also to look into the promptness and effectiveness of the Delhi Fire Service in tackling the situation. Instructions have also been issued to the Ministers/ Departments housed in various government buildings to ensure that fire prevention measures are not only adequate but work efficiently. Furthermore, all unauthorised wooden cabins set up in passages, furniture, almirahs, obstructing the corridors, staircases and lift lobbies should be removed forthwith as they are not only a fire hazard but obstruct fire-fighting operations.

(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): Sir, what is the extent of damage? Is it correct that papers and documents relating to some accounts, etc., have been damaged? What is the nature of the damage? (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH (Aonla): What I mean to say is that we are discussing here the measures to extinguish fire.....

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Questions cannot be asked on this.

SHRI RAJVEERSINGH: What arrangements are going to be made to check the incidence of fire in future. The Records are being set on fire, fire is breaking out in every building. What measures do you propose to take to prevent fire incidents in future? Have you received any information regarding the extent of damage caused by fire which had broken out in the recent past?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are not supposed to ask questions after the statement has been made. Kindly take your seat.

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Amar Roypradhan

14.35 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Rise in Prices In the Country—Contd.

[*English*]

SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN (Cooch Behar): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the National Front Government was elected on the basis of many promises. Certainly, one of them was to check the price-rise. If we go to the market, we will find that the prices of consumer goods have shot up sky high. Before I started speaking, many speakers have given figures regarding the price-rise. I would not like to repeat those figures. (*Interruptions*) I go to the market almost daily in the morning. If you go there, you would find overnight change in the price schedule. Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee has rightly said that the women-folk or the ladies who are in the kitchen feel it more. (*Interruptions*) No one can deny that 16 per cent hike in the price of petrol and 17 per cent hike in the price of diesel had triggered the chain reaction in the price-rise. A hike in the railway fare and freight has also adversely affected the prices of the commodities.

14.36 hrs.

[**SHRI VAKKOM PURUSHOTHANAM** in the Chair]

I know the hon. Finance Minister and his colleagues have a pious wish to bring down the prices. But I am sorry to say that the action is not such. But merely speaking is not enough. The necessary action is needed simultaneously. If we look at the activities of the Government, we find that they are suffering from confusion. Not only confusion, it is very much right to say that they are suffering from contradiction. Because I am coming to the price of wheat. The Agricultural Costs and Prices Commission had fixed the price of wheat at Rs. 200 per quintal as against Rs. 183 during the last year. But our Deputy Prime Minister has announced to enhance the price of wheat to Rs. 215 per quintal. He also announced that this has been done to give remunerative price to the farmers. It is all right. I have no objection to that. But that about the agricultural labourers share-croppers and small and marginal farmers? May I know about it? You know that the share-croppers and the agricultural labourers are also poor. If you take into account the marginal farmers and small farmers along with agricultural labourers then 80 per cent of the total rural population are the people who are to buy wheat from the market for their livelihood. You are speaking about 20 per cent of the population. But, you are not giving subsidised wheat to these poor people.

But you cannot deny the share of the agricultural labourers and share croppers and other small marginal farmers. They have to buy wheat when they are growing wheat by sweat and blood. It is terrific that they have to buy wheat at a hike of 32 paise. No subsidy.

As a student of economics, we all know that anatomically speaking, the price rise will have to be considered from four district stand-points. First point is the simple forces of demand and supply. Even in this demand and supply point, there is a contradiction. For example, consider tea. Tea is hiked by 35