

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. C. SETHI) : I am thankful to Prof. Madhu Dandavate for making a correction in the statement which I had made.

With your permission I can say that on 7th May, 1984, I had given some information in this Hon'ble House regarding the arrest of persons in connection with the recent incidents at Moga. The matter had been brought up all of a sudden in the House and I am sorry that there was a slight inaccuracy in what I had said.

The correct position is that on 26th April, 1984, 10 persons had been arrested at Moga. On 3rd May, 1984, again 16 persons arrested these under section 188 IPC ; and 6 out of these were also arrested in a case under section 436/427 IPC. On 3rd May, 1984, 13 weapons were recovered. The Deputy Commissioner of the District later visited the Gurdwara Bibi Kahan Kaur. 2 hand grenades were recovered the next day.

Shri Madhu Dandavate has raised this issue and I appreciate his alert response to what I had stated, I may assure the House that in any case I had intended to correct the figures which I had inadvertently given out. I regret for the inaccuracy in my statement and beg pardon of the House for this inaccuracy which I had made.

12.19 hrs.

[MR DEPUTY SPEKAER *in the Chair*]

CALLING ATTENTION TO  
MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC  
IMPORTANCE

Reported distress sale and decline in the prices of wheat and other agricultural produce in various states and the need to provide remunerative prices to farmers.

SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN (Kangra) : I call the attention of the Minister of Agriculture to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon :—

“Reported distress sale and decline in the prices of wheat and other agricultural produce in various States and the need to provide remunerative prices to farmers and the action taken by the Government in regard thereto.”

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA) : Sir, The Hon. Members have mentioned about the reported distress sale and decline in the prices of wheat and other agricultural produce in various States and the need to provide remunerative prices to the farmers and the action taken by the Government in regard thereto. The agricultural price policy of the Government is directed towards ensuring remunerative prices to the agricultural producers and safeguarding their inter interests. For this purpose, procurement/support prices are being announced for major agricultural commodities each year. For a large number of commodities purchases are organised at the support prices through public agencies.

Over the last four years from January, 1980 till now, the procurement or minimum support prices of cereal crops have been raised by Government by 31 to 39 per cent, of pulses by 40 to 71 per cent, of cotton, by 46 per cent and those of major oilseeds by to 66 per cent.

An index of the soundness of the price policy is the production trend. In the case of wheat, the country has been showing spectacular progress in production. Since 1980-81, production of wheat has been surpassing previous record production each year with the latest wheat harvest is expected to reach 44.6 million tonnes. Last year, Government procured a record quantity of 8.3 million tonnes of wheat. In the current season the procurement arrangements are being stepped up. In the five major wheat producing State of Punjab, Haryana, U.P., Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh 6,701 Centres are already reported to have been opened for wheat purchases as against 6,071 last year.

The level of wheat procurement this year, according to the latest figures, comes to 21.11 lakh tonnes as compared to 12.34 lakh tonnes during the corresponding period last year. This shows a rise of 71 per cent. The available reports indicate that in Haryana the procurement constitutes 98.3 per cent of the market arrivals. In Punjab, procurement constitutes 99.5 per cent of the market arrivals. In Uttar Pradesh, the level of procurement presently is 3.54 lakh tonnes which is 100 per cent higher than the procurement by this time last year. In Rajasthan also, wheat procurement has touched 33.1 thousand tonnes as against last year's 5.7 thousand tonnes. These figures show that the tempo of wheat procurement is much higher than last year.

For rice, the, other most important cereal crop, also the price policy

has provided incentive for increased production. In the current year, the production of rice is estimated to reach a record level of 59.33 million tonnes which exceeds the previous peak level by a margin of about 5.5 million tonnes. The Government has already procured about 7.09 million tonnes of rice and further procurement is still continuing.

The support prices are being fixed by Government for a number of other commodities such as cotton, jute, sugarcane, groundnut, rapeseed and mustard, soyabean sunflower seed, etc. Practically for all these commodities the ruling market prices are significantly higher than the minimum support prices fixed by the Government.

The continuing progress of agricultural production is sufficient evidence that the price policy pursued by the Government is producing a favourable impact. In the last four years, the average annual growth rate in foodgrains production is higher than 4 per cent exceeding the targeted rate of growth envisaged under the Sixth Five Year Plan.

It has always been the policy of the Government that the interest of the farmers are promoted through access to technology and physical means of production and they are able to market their produce at reasonable prices. Constant watch is kept on the price situation and efforts are made through market interventions, credit support and other corrective measures to ensure a fair deal for our farmers.

SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN: Sir, let me first congratulate the Minister before I come to the other side of the picture for helping the growth of food production. But all that glows is not gold. So, that part of the story has to be brought up.

Sir, it is a well known fact that India's prosperity depends on the prosperity of the farmers. And unless the farmer is prosperous, the country cannot achieve the prosperity which we expected India to achieve. Sir, there is always a time limit within which a country achieves a particular standard of living or a standard of prosperity. In certain countries it has taken 20 years; it has taken 30, 40 or 50 years in others. I would like to know when that will happen so far as this country is concerned. Japan and we started together in 1950. Japan in one generation has come to a stage or the position of one of the wealthiest countries. It has reached the take-off stage. The question arises, why? Why is it that Japan and other countries are using computers to find out when water is required, or how much is needed, or about seeds? But so far as India is concerned, what to speak of farmers, even the agricultural universities are not using computers to find out the details about farming.

So you can see the difference. Unless you pay the farmers the right price, how is he going to bring in the right technology in farm development? There are certain reports which are repeatedly appearing in the press and I would like to read a few such reports from some of them to show what is actually happening at the basic points. This is *Navbharat Times* dated 7th March 1984. It is speaking about UP Mandie. I hope it has been brought to the notice of the Hon. Minister. But in any case I would like to read it so that inquiries are made into what is happening. Now this is what the report says :

राज्य के विभिन्न जिलों, तहसीलों और गेहूं मण्डियों से संवाद आ रहे हैं कि किसान 130-140 रुपये प्रति क्विंटल भाव पर गेहूं बेच रहा है।

That is, the farmer is selling Rs. 130 or 140 whereas the minimum price is fixed at Rs. 152.

ग्रामीण अंचलों और गांवों के छंटे हाट बाजारों में तो भाव और नीचे चले जाने की खबरें आ रही हैं।

That is in smaller mandie the prices are still going down.

चन्द्रशेखर आजाद विश्व-विद्यालय के वैज्ञानिकों के अनुसार प्रदेश में गेहूं की उत्पादन लागत व औसत से 186 रुपये प्रति क्विंटल बैठती है। कृषि मूल्य आयोग के सामने गेहूं उत्पादक राज्यों ने यदि 170 रुपये प्रति क्विंटल की मांग की थी तो तर्क यही था कि किसान की न्यूनतम नहीं लाभप्रद मूल्य चाहिए।

That is he is asking for profit.

Now the *Statesman* of 6th May, 1984 is talking of Haryana from where the Agriculture Minister comes from. The Statement says :

"The mismanagement by officials, lack of facilities and obstructions by purchasing agents appointed by government have forced some of the farmers to sell their wheat at Haily Grain Market at considerable lower prices. Farmers have to go 40 kilometres to sell their wheat."

Now the middlemen and brokers are taking advantage of the danger of rain and so forth? In this connection the paper further on says :

"the broker purchasing agent quitey comes and tells him that he need not wait because of the danger of rains. If he

only takes a few rupees less per quintal, immediate unloading of the grains can be arranged. The farmers, say 20% of them, fall prey to this ruse. For twenty quintal they are being given anything between Rs. 3 and Rs. 5 less."

This means considerably more profit for the middlemen. And who is the sufferer? The one who has been hit the hardest in this process; and it is the small farmers, who do not have money to hold out for long. Quoting Statesmen further;

"A few days before wedding season started, many farmers started selling wheat because they wanted ready cash and agents have taken lot of advantage of the situation."

The question arises why it is happening every year after all wheat arrives every year. Has ever an inquiry taken place?

*(Interruptions)*

Somebody must inquire periodically that this is the date when the first bushel of wheat arrives in the market. Why the Government agencies have not gone on the first day? Or why have they waited for some time? If they have waited, why have they waited? Who is responsible for the loss which the farmer has incurred?

Now, the sufferer is the small farmer, because big farmer can hold back and wait. It is the small farmer who, need money immediately as he has to pay back loans, he has to buy essentials for his family. So, he has to go on the first day itself and throw his wheat in the market. It is not the well-to-do farmers who throw their wheat in the market because they can keep in

their godowns. It is the weaker farmers who come on the first day. Have you held any inquiry and suspended any officers for dereliction of duty? And if so, how many officers have you suspended, because either they are in collusion with the middlemen or with the agents, because it is these people who see that the Government agencies are out for some time till they corner the wheat of the weaker farmers. So, they get mixed up with most of the Officers.

And then the wheat of that poor farmer which has been cornered by the middleman is purchased by the Government agencies at the price which has been fixed. If so far no officer has been suspended, that by itself is a clear indication that there is something wrong somewhere. So, I would like to know from the Minister, for the last four years how many officers in different States have been charge-sheeted or suspended for not going into the market at the right time when the wheat started arriving in the market and giving the fair price to farmer.

Secondly, you won't allow the other States to buy wheat from the wheat growing States without your permission. So, you deliberately push down prices of the farmers' produce. For example, the U.P. State cannot buy from the Punjab market directly as a state as you do not allow the States to come into the market directly. The result is that the prices are deliberately kept low. Whereas the middleman can buy directly, the States cannot do. If you allow all the States to come into the market, automatically the farmer would have got a fairer price. But you don't do it. So far as the industrial sector is concerned, every year the industrial sector gets the best price. But only in the case of farmers producing the crops you prohibit competition. Unless there is competition, how is the farmer to get the

best price ? This is another way in which the farmer is deprived of his dues. The question is : Why don't you allow affair competition amongst the buyers so that the poor farmer gets the best price ?

Thirdly, in every sector of society as for example, the labour or the Government officers, they get their wages according to the price index. Every year you are giving D.A. instalments to them because the price index is going up. Why don't you fix the prices of farm produce also according to the price index ? In the last four years, the prices have shot up by 75 per cent and what you are giving is 31 per cent. Even the Universities have suggested that what you paying is much below the cost of production. The other day the Industry Minister was answering in the House regarding tyres in which case the Government allowed the prices to shoot up and the reply was that 'we will send it to the Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices to decide what is the fair price and then we will tell the producer to reduce the price.' In the case of farmers you don't allow others to come in. So, you won't get the fair price for them in any case. You will buy from the foreign markets at a much higher price, but you will not give the right price to the farmers and the result is that in many instances the farmers are turning to cash crops which is ultimately going to injure in the long run the production of food crops. You are not foreseeing it, but many farmers have started raising certain types of cash crops. You are going to face this problem after some time and if you see the number of acres which are brought down in respect of wheat cultivation, you will realise what I am saying. So, you should find out how many acres of land have been taken out of wheat cultivation after 1980. The production has gone up because of certain other factors—irrigation

facilities, better grain-seed, and so on and so forth. But the quantum of area under wheat crop has gone down. This point has to be checked up. Therefore, I would like to know from the Minister how much area has been taken out from wheat cultivation and other types of food crops.

Today maximum amount of wheat has come into the market. But your officers have started the campaign of work-to-rule. It is a fact that the work to rule campaign has started ? If so, who will suffer ? Obviously the farmer.

What alternative has been provided to the farmer so that wheat procurement programmes do not suffer ?

Finally, I would like to know what mind is have been opened in Himachal Pradesh, especially Kangra ? If no mandi has been opened, why not ?

I hope the Minister will consider these points and answer them.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (RAO BIRENDRA SINGH) : I am thankful to the hon. Member for raising questions regarding the welfare of farmers and the need for making adequate and timely arrangements for purchase of foodgrains immediately as the harvest starts coming in.

He has compared the conditions in India with that of Japan. I am sure he knows the difference in the conditions prevailing here and in some of the countries with which he wants to compare. India is a large country. It has only a small proportion of cropped area under irrigation. The majority of our farmers are very small farmers. About 75% own less than two hectares of land. It is not possible to provide in this developing country the subsidies that are available to farmers in a country like Japan. Agriculture there is very highly

subsidised. The G. N. P. in Japan is not from agriculture only. That is essentially an industrial country. I would not like to go into the figures of prices being paid for farm produce in Japan with what we pay in India. But I would like to assure the hon. Member that the prices that we pay here are remunerative.

SHRI CHITTA BASU : No.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : These are support prices but they are still remunerative. The cost of production is fully taken into account. We have also laid down that the terms of trade as between agricultural commodities and non-agricultural commodities will also be taken into consideration by the APC while recommending minimum support price or procurement price.

*(Interruptions)*

This policy was adopted when this Government of Shrimati Gandhi was formed in 1980. This was one of the first decisions that we took. I do not claim that complete parity has been achieved in terms of trade in agricultural and non-agricultural goods. But we have improved the parity during the last four years. The parity has been moving in favour of the farm sector. But we have not yet, as I said, come to the level of 100% parity. As regards price in the farm sector, the percentage of price index as compared to non-agricultural goods, is still lower than the prices for other produce. But we are considering to get better prices for the farmers.

The hon. Member maintains that the cost of production is higher, than the prices that we pay, I do not agree at all. He quoted instances of Uttar Pradesh.

SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN : I have quoted Chandrashekar University.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : We have collected figures from universities, from various other agencies, management institutes. The cost of production in Uttar Pradesh is on the average Rs. 138 per quintal. This is higher than the cost of production in Panjab and Haryana which ranges between Rs. 120 to Rs. 125 per quintal. Even if we take the cost of production as Rs. 138, the price fixed at Rs. 152 is profitable for the farmer.

It is because a margin of profit is always allowed when we fix prices for procurement.

*(Interruptions)*

But there are so many factors which probably affect the farmers. For instance, there is a natural calamity, as Prof. Ranga just mentioned. But there are other schemes for helping the farmers in cases of natural calamity. As you know, during the last two years or so, actually right from the beginning when this Government took over from the year 1980, the assistance that we have provided to the States against natural calamities has been very high. It is for drought and for floods etc. Even during the current year, around Rs. 335 crores—I am not very sure about the figure because this has suddenly cropped up—but very large subsidy has been provided for relief against floods. A lot of assistance has been given to the States suffering from drought during the last 4 years—1979-80, again in 1982-83 and in 1983-84. I do not rule out the possibility of prices sometimes going in certain markets below the price fixed by us. But there are so many markets and the purchase arrangements are made by the State and Central agencies this time, as you would have seen from the figures quoted, more than 6700 centres have been opened for purchasing this year as against more than 6000 centres last year. We have given the figures in the statement. I would not go into that again and again. But there is a possibility that the purcha-

ing agency entering the markets sometimes a little late creates problem for some farmers. But that is not a general complaint.

You would also appreciate that FCI, the agency of the Government of India is not the only agency for making purchases. In fact, in U. P., a larger number of markets are allocated to the State agencies. FCI purchases may be 20 to 25% of the total wheat arrival in U.P. mandis. In Punjab and Haryana also, it is about the same position. In Haryana, I am told that 27% of the wheat will be purchased by FCI. And the rest, 73%, will be purchased by the State agencies. Therefore, it would be wrong to say that the Government of India's agency is responsible for not making arrangement in time for purchasing all the things from the mandis all over the country.

SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN : Both are responsible.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : Well, both are responsible.

As regards action taken against defaulting officers, my hon. colleague, the Food Minister who is in-charge of procurement and FCI is sitting here and I don't think he also can reply to a question like this suddenly. Unless there are specific complaints made to the Department against certain officers who have defaulted no action is possible.

(Interruptions)

There are market committees under the State Acts in all the States. The market committees are composed of farmers representatives and elected representatives.

SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN : You know very well as to they are controlled by whom.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : A market committee is composed of

producers and the traders in the mandis, others and a few Government nominees—may be from the block side. It is not the Government. It is in the hands of farmers. That I can say about Haryana and Punjab about which I know. About 19 or 20 members in the market committee, 60% are producers and the same may be the constitution in other States also, to my mind. Therefore, it is wrong to say that market committees which are responsible for management of the mandis and for safeguarding the interests of the farmers are Government agencies. They are farmers' Bodies practically.

(Interruptions)

If there are any complaints, I would request my hon. friend Shri Vikram Mahajan to write to Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad and certainly action will be taken against those found guilty of cheating the farmers.

The hon. Member wants to have a system of States competing with other States for purchases all over the country. That is not possible. That will create confusion. That will go against our policies. No procurement will be possible then. Our public distribution system will fail. It will collapse. Therefore, it is State's responsibility through its agencies and the Central Agencies to help them to procure foodgrains within the State. But so far as farmers are concerned, they are allowed to sell at a higher price to any other Agency, for instance, traders. If the traders can pay higher prices, there is no bar to their selling to the traders at higher prices.

The hon. Member said that because the purchasing agencies of the Government did not enter the market in time, the prices went below our announced price.

Imagine the conditions that will be faced by farmers if these purchasing agencies of the Government remain out

of scene for some time. The traders would not pay higher prices. They would exploit.

**SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN :** I never said that Government should not have agencies. I said that Government should put several agencies so that the farmer gets better price.

**RAO BIRENDRA SINGH :** Government has several agencies. The Central Government has FCI making purchases and against them, the competition is with traders. If the traders can make profit, can move foodgrains outside State, there is no ban on it. According to our policy, they can pay higher prices but we have to make the State agencies responsible to make purchases within the State itself. We cannot allow them a cut-throat competition amongst themselves.

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER :** You will not allow unhealthy cut-throat competition. But if the competition is healthy you will allow it.

**RAO BIRENDRA SINGH :** It is not going to be healthy competition. It is an unhealthy competition in the State start purchasing. But if the States freely purchase all over the country in every State, where is the need for the States to come to the Centre for allotment of foodgrains ?

**SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN :** You don't allow them. Therefore, they have to come to you.

**RAO BIRENDRA SINGH :** That is why we keep a buffer stock of about 20 million tons of foodgrains during the year to help the States to distribute foodgrains through public distribution through fair price shops, the number of which is increasing. The number of fair price shops is quite substantial now. Apart from that, for supply of foodgrains at a cheaper rate to the workers, who are employed under our various employment schemes like the NREP

and the Landless Employment Guarantee Scheme, recently Government has taken the decision.

The Prime Minister announced the decision. Wheat, for instance, will be sold at Rs. 150 per quintal to the workers employed on development work as against Rs. 172 per quintal which is available through the fair price shops.

These are the various schemes which we have been implementing for the last so many years and they have proved very successful.

I do not agree that there has been any substantial decrease in wheat area. This increase is a very big jump in wheat production, as was just mentioned by my colleague in the statement that has come about on account of wheat area, if not increasing, at least remaining more or less stable.

More and more area is coming under irrigation, and the irrigated area is going mostly under wheat or paddy. Because they are still very paying crops, no farmer would like to switch over from wheat or paddy to any other crop. If you want the figures I can give. The wheat area, according to the information supplied to me, has been increasing. In the year 1981-82, the area was 22.14 million hectares. In the year 1982-83, which was also drought year, the area under wheat increased to 23.15 million hectares. Therefore, there has been no reduction. That is a very false impression which the hon. Member has got.

**SHRI ARJUN SETHI (Bhadrak) :** At the outset I feel it my duty to congratulate the farmers of the country because of whose dedicated efforts a record production of 149 million tonnes of foodgrains was possible this year. I also thank the ho. Minister and the Government ; it is because of their policy, the incentives given to the farmers the farmans could utilise these and make there cord production



possible. I am entirely, in agreement with the hon. Minister that the agricultural policy of the Government was directed towards ensuring remunerative price to the farmers and safeguarding their interests. But at the same time I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to this. It is, of course, a fact that they have appointed procuring agencies at the Central level and there are State agencies also at the State level. But I must say that the requirements of, especially the small and marginal farmers, are not being met adequately with the arrangements that we have at present. Because from my experience, being an agriculturist myself, I can say that the point of time when these agencies go to the market for purchasing, say, wheat or rice or potato or whatever the products may be, is not opportune. The small and marginal farmers want to sell their products immediately because they have to pay for the cooperative loans, they have to clear the dues, the loans which they obtained from various sources even from money lenders. They want that these agencies should be there immediately, specially in the remotest rural areas, so that they can sell their products in time.

Coming from an eastern State of Orissa, I know that rice is the main produce in that area. But I know also that the FCI and the cooperative agencies appointed for procurement go very late. By that time the marginal and the small farmers have no produce to sell. That is why, the plight of the farmers belonging to this category is miserable. I have pointed out here many times and I have asked questions also of the Minister. I know, the hon. Minister is very keen to improve the lot of the farmers.

I know he hails from Haryana and also in the neighbouring State Punjab where the farmers have improved their lot because they have made enormous strides and they have made enormous efforts to see that the production figure improves for their

benefit. But in the States, especially in the North-eastern region, as has been pointed out by the Economic Advisory Committee appointed by the Government of India, production of rice has not improved in the last five years. Only this year it has improved, as the hon. Minister has mentioned, by 5 odd million tonnes. The Economic Advisory Committee has mentioned that the production of rice has stagnated over the years. So I would ask the hon. Minister that they must go into the causes why this stagnation was there, what are the difficulties, what are the impediments due to which rice production has not improved. I am all for increased production. I am very glad that in Haryana and Punjab they have done maximum and they have achieved very handsome figures in the production of rice and wheat. But I would like to impress upon the hon. Minister that he must also see why in those States, especially in Orissa, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and also in UP and Bengal—predominantly the areas producing rice—and Assam also the production is not commensurate with the achievements made in other parts of the country. What are the impediments in improving the production of rice? This, I would request the hon. Minister, should be gone into.

The hon. Minister has pointed out in figures how they have increased the procurement price. But he has not mentioned the cost of production. I am entirely in agreement with him. He has later on mentioned the cost of production. At the same time we must also see what is the increase in the prices of other commodities, that has taken place. So unless there is some sort of relationship between what the farmer gets for his produce and what he has to pay for the consumer goods to be purchased in no way the farmers' community will be benefited or will get satisfaction.

At the end I would like to ask specific questions. I am entirely in agreement with him that they have appointed

agencies. Both FCI and State agencies are there. But they must have to find out an alternative machinery to see that whatever prices they offer in the form of remunerative prices are being implemented and the farmers, especially the small and marginal farmers should get it in time and when their need is very acute. I know that it is very difficult to appoint such type of people or such type of agencies but since this is very important, I would request him that he must issue instructions to the State Governments at least in the far-flung and remotest areas of the country that this support price is made available to the farmers in time when the need of the farmer is the most.

Lastly, I have already pointed out and I would again stress that rice production has not improved in the eastern States. What are the causes? These causes must be gone into and corrective measures taken to see that production of rice improves in those States and the lot of poor people is improved for their benefit.

**RAO BIRENDRA SINGH :** I agree with the hon. Minister, Mr Sethi, that rice production has not picked up in the north-eastern region as in other States. There are various reasons for it. The cultivation practices are not according to the latest technology that we have evolved. High-yielding varieties are not used to an appreciable extent. Water management practices also are poor and more than anything else, fertiliser consumption is very low. But we are paying more attention now and as was announced by me in the House some time back, we have this year started a new scheme for the north eastern region. Particularly 6 States are covered. We have selected some blocks in a pilot project where subsidies are proposed to be made available to farmers for seed. There will be other subsidies also available. Smaller packets of fertilisers will also be available to farmers from our sale points and various other things.

13.00 hrs.

Orissa is also one of the States which has been covered, as also West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and the north eastern India and in fact entire Assam also has been included in our scheme and this scheme will be extended in the Seventh Five Year Plan. That is our intention. We shall take larger areas and larger number of blocks. Rs. 5 crores have been set aside this year for this new scheme and I am glad to say that even in Orissa rice production has been showing better trend. It is increasing. During last year the production was better than in the previous year and this year also we expect there will be much better results because farmers are now taking to the new technology and the practices that we have been advocating and our research institutes and centres through various demonstrations and our extension services are trying to inform the farmers as to how to grow better crops.

I agree and I have already said that the price increase is not so much in favour of the farm sector. But whenever there is rise in the cost of production, the support prices announced by the Government are also enhanced and the prices of inputs, when they rise, are taken into account when the Agricultural Prices Commission makes recommendations for fixing higher prices.

The hon. Member will appreciate that this procurement system through the Government agencies is mainly directed to help the small and marginal farmers and to save them from exploitation and manipulation by the traders because it is only the small and marginal farmers who have to resort to distress sale because they need money badly as they collect the crops. The larger farmers, the richer farmers can hold back their crop waiting for better prices. But the smaller farmers do not have that capacity and, therefore, I entirely agree with him that in the interests of the small and marginal farmers, our purchasing agencies must

enter the market immediately as the crops come. In fact there should be advance planning and I hope this is kept in view by the Food Ministry all the time and also by the purchasing agencies of the State Governments, but if there are lapses we receive at once the complaints from various places, as hon. Member, mentioned just now remunerative prices in some parts of the country were not available for some time. That is why some poor farmers would have suffered. But we shall certainly keep an eye on this as I have already promised.

13.05 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till five minutes past fourteen of the clock.*

— — —

*The Lok Sabha then re-assembled after Lunch at Eleven minutes past Fourteen of the Clock*

[SHRI R.S. SPARROW—in the Chair]

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER  
OF URGENT PUBLIC  
IMPORTANCE—*Contd.*

Reported distress sale and decline in the prices of wheat and other agricultural produce in various states and the need to provide remunerative prices to farmers—*Contd.*

MR. CHAIRMAN : We now continue the Calling Attention Motion. Shri Chitta Basu to speak.

SHRI CHITTA BASU (Barasat) : Sir, the subject matter of this Calling Attention is very important and I have gone through the statement made by the hon. Minister. The whole statement reveals a sense of

complacency and the facts so far given do not correspond to the reality. Sir, the basic question relating to this subject namely, the question of remunerative price for the agricultural produce. Secondly, the question of price parity is involved and thirdly, the overall policy of the Government regarding the price fixation by the APC is also to be considered.

I am glad the hon. Minister has mentioned about the terms of trade between the agricultural produce and the manufactured produce. Sir, it will be admitted and, I think, he has also admitted that has not been a parity between the two and I would only like to draw the Government's attention, particularly the hon. Minister's attention as to what extent agriculture has lost to the industry because our industry, even today, is dominated by certain monopoly houses and multi-nationals and the agricultural produce is used as the basic input for the manufacture of goods in the factories. The question of price parity between the two assumed great importance in the matter of our national economy. Here, in this matter, it is the peasants who are always at the losing end. I have got some figures to suggest to what extent agriculture in our country has lost to industry. This loss by the agriculture to the industry has been of the order of Rs. 900 crores in the Year 1971-72.

Those losses increased to Rs. 1200 crores for 1972-73. It went further to Rs. 1500 crores for 1975-76, Rs. 1680 crores for 1976-77, and Rs. 4500 crores for 1980-81. The latest figure is not available with me. You would understand the importance of this point, namely the question of term of trade. He has agreed that the term of trade is unfavourable for the agriculture,

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (RAO BIRENDRA SINGH) : It has been improving.

**SHRI CHITTA BASU :** I doubt that. If you can give me the figures for that, I will be happy.

The hon. Minister claims that the position has been improving. I have got the latest figures with me regarding the price parity and the index for the manufactured articles and the index for the agricultural products, and the source is Economic Survey of the Government of India for 1983-84. I think, that is the latest. If you take the figures of the month of December, 1983, you will find that while the index for manufactured products is 294.9 the index for the agricultural products is 289. And if you take the price parity, it is 102. If you take the entire period, you will find that not only the disparity exists, but the disparity has also not narrowed substantially. As a student of economics, I am more concerned with the question of trade trend, and I find that there has not been the narrowing of the disparity or gap between the index of manufactured products and the index for agricultural products. This causes erosion to the income of the peasants. Somebody may argue that this helps the kulaks, but that is not so. There are poor peasants, there are middle peasants, there are marginal peasants and they are in majority, and those poor farmers have also to part with their produce and any fall in prices naturally hits them the most. Therefore, the question of price parity is an important one, and in that respect the Government has failed, and the present policy pursued by the Government contributes to further widening of the gap. What steps do the Government propose to take to narrow down the existing disparity between the two? It is very important in a wider sense.

In respect of the relation between the price of agricultural produce and the manufactured products, I want only to quote from a recent write-up in the Economic Times in relation to cotton and cotton textile. That will

further explain the point which I have already made. It says :

“Prices of the textiles have increased at a much faster pace than the prices of cotton during the past decade.”

The implication of it is obvious and I need not dilate on it. Let us also have a look at the comments made by the Public Undertakings Committee, 1981-82.

The Committee examined the Cotton Corporation of India Limited. There, the subject regarding the prices of raw cotton and the prices of textile goods was also taken up. Sir, I would like to quote the observations made by the Chairman, Cotton Corporation of India, when he was being examined by the Committee. He says :

“In Punjab, even the support prices of cotton are not adequate to sustain the production.”

I have got greater knowledge in this respect than you have. The CCI Chairman says that the support price fixed for cotton in Punjab is not adequate enough to sustain the production. The implications of it are obvious. Then, he further says that the CCI has to see to it that the growers get good remunerative prices and not mere support price. Here comes the question of support price and remunerative price support price is the minimum price, which does not ensure reasonable profit, which does not ensure further incentive to production and growth. The CCI Chairman was perfectly right when he says that the question is not about support price but about remunerative price.

The prices of textile goods have been increasing for the last few decades and there is a large gap between the prices of cotton and prices

of textile goods. Sir, the policy of the Government is quite obvious. Fixing up lower rates for cotton ultimately helps the cotton mill owners who reap heavy profits. I strongly feel that this aspect has not been taken into consideration. The Committee on Public Undertaking strongly recommended that the question of fixing support prices for all varieties of cotton on the basis of actual cost of production and at the same time assuring reasonable return to the growers should be urgently taken up with the Agricultural Prices Commission. The Committee would expect the Commission to go into this aspect afresh and ensure that the support prices announced by them are really remunerative prices. Sir, the conclusion is irresistible. The Committee believes that the support price fixed by the APC for cotton was not remunerative price. I think it needs hardly any further argument. Since it is the Committee's Report, I would like to quote a few sentences from another chapter.

"There is a general feeling that the cotton growers are not getting remunerative prices for their produce, whereas a large number of textile mill owners are making substantial profits."

The Committee, therefore, suggested that Ministry should examine the whole question afresh so as to find out the exact relationship between the prices cotton and cloth. Whenever textile prices go up substantially, cotton growers also should to get a share and the price of cotton should be raised accordingly. Now, naturally the statement contains contain percentage of increase in certain agricultural commodities.

My contention is the price increase is not commensurate with the price increase of the manufactured product. That causes erosion of income of the peasantry, and their growing impoverisation. Government's policy regarding fixation of prices of

commodities has not taken this aspect of our economy into consideration, and it needs reversal.

I would draw the attention of the Minister to another important aspect, viz. the predicament in which the State Governments are landed. State Governments are sometimes compelled to fix higher prices of certain agricultural produces, than those fixed by APC. You can take the very clear example of sugarcane. Various State Governments are forced to give a price higher than the price fixed by APC.

The Finance Minister is not here. This is very much connected with the finances of the State. The Finance Minister asks: "Why does the State Government run into deficit"? What will the poor State Government do, irrepentive of its political complexion? So, in order to satisfy the need of the growers in their States, the Governments ought to give higher prices for their produces, and in order to meet their genuine and legitimate grievances, This aspects has never been taken into account. Particularly, the impact on the economy of the State and the economy of the nation as a whole, has not been taken into account by APC. It is not merely a question of giving some particular benefit by way of charity. It is a question which relates to the basic compulsions of the the economy.

Recently, the Government of Karnataka has raised a very basic question, viz: "Will not the State Government sometime become involved in the matter of decision-making processes, for fixation of prices of agricultural commodities? There are various aspects of it. They have prepared a long note. Their complaint—it is equally the complaint of the West Bengal Government—is

(Shri Chitta Basu)

that the Centre fixes the prices. It does not take into account the cost of production calculated by the State Government. The Centre imposes its decision. The State Government has to bear the brunt, resulting in total dislocation of the economy, and creating unnecessary strains between the Centre and the States. The Governments of Karnataka and other non-Congress (I) Governments have raised the demand that State Governments should also be involved in the matter of fixing the prices of agricultural commodities.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh wants not only to contribute to the Central Pool, but also to supply rice at Rs. 2 a kg. They have a programme for doing this. They also have their own programme to feed children, i. e. to give mid-day meals to them. For that, they require more foodgrains. You don't give. They want to procure foodgrains. Further, they want loans from the Reserve Bank of India. The Reserve Bank here does not agree to give the loan. They want the loan for this particular purpose.

My point is that the State Government is not made a part of the decision-making process, whereas, the decision taken by the APC tells very much upon the economy of the State, creating an economic dichotomy.

All these facts lead us to the irresistible conclusion that the growers are not getting remunerative prices of various agricultural products in different parts of the country, which cause great losses to the income of peasants. The present system of price fixation of commodities has become irrelevant. Would the government review the policy on the price fixation of the commodities? Would they reconstitute the Agricultural Prices Commission with adequate

representatives from the farming interests and also with the representatives of the State Governments? Would they also appoint a high powered committee to go into the question of the prices of agricultural products and manufactured produce in order to suggest measures for perfect parity between the two? I hope the government will reply to these three specific questions and take appropriate action having regard to the fact that this is not merely a question of raising prices of certain products by 5 per cent or 2 per cent, but it is very much connected with the total economic policy of our country.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : I do not agree with my hon. friend that government has shown any complacency while giving reply to the various questions raised during the discussion on this calling attention motion. We have simply stated the facts as they are and we are facing realities. He has mentioned about the price of cotton I do not know how the hon. member received his information. But the cotton prices during this year were raised quite substantially when we announced the prices. *(Interruptions)* Over the 1979-80 price. The price that we fixed last time is 45.5 per cent higher within a period of 4 years, almost 50 per cent higher price has been fixed; and the prices ruling in the market for *Kapas* are much higher than the announced price. You have mentioned about Punjab. In Punjab, as against the announced price of Rs. 400 for F-414 variety, *Kapas* has been selling in Abohar and other mandis in Ferozepur District at Rs. 626 per quintal, almost 50 per cent more than the announced price. But I must say that the hon. member while speaking for the farmers today also is very much critical of the government when the question of raising prices, issue prices for foodgrains is in question.

*(Interruptions) \*\**

\*\*Not recorded.

**SHRI CHITTA BASU :** You give subsidy to Birlas and Tatas, but you refuse to give subsidy to farmers.

(Interruptions)\*\*

**RAO BIRENDRA SINGH :** While we consult the State Governments, which always try to recommend higher prices for farmers, they do not agree to increase the issue price.

\*(Interruptions)

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री (पटना) :  
आप अपने पास से दें ।

श्री बीरेन्द्र सिंह : शास्त्री जी कहां से दें । आपको देना पड़े तो पता चले । कैसे दें ।

(Interruptions)\*\*

They do not produce, and they do not procure. They only put it on the Central Government. I am not going into the prices of manufactured goods item by item. I do not dispute the fact that the prices of manufactured goods are higher than the prices of agricultural produce. If you take the wholesale price index into consideration it is so. I have admitted that, and I have said that we have not been able to achieve parity in spite of our best efforts because the Government cannot take action in two ways as suggested by Mr. Chitta Basu. We have to keep one eye on the farmer who produces and the other eye on the consumers' interests.

(Interruptions)\*\*

We do not have three eyes.

But we use our two eyes to the best possible advantage of all our citizens, producers as well as consumers, Mr.

Chitta Basu quoted some figures. He mentioned the wholesale price index for 1983. I will give him the latest price index figures.

**SHRI CHITTA BASU :** That is allright. But what is the trend ?

**RAO BIRENDRA SINGH :** In mid-April this year the whole price index number for manufactured goods was 303.2 and for agricultural goods it was 287.3, and the difference is only 5.5 per cent.

And, I would like you to compare it with the price index for the year 1980, four years ago when this Government came into power. In 1980, immediately after this Janata Government or whatever it was had gone out, the price index was\*\*

(Interruptions)\*\*

Whatever I say about agriculture, I understand agriculture but not the working of that hotch-potch.

(Interruptions)\*\*

In 1980 in the same period, mid-April the index price or wholesale price-index for manufactured goods was 234.7. Mr. Basu may like to note it ; and for agricultural goods it was 193.3. A difference of 21.4 per cent.

**SHRI CHITTA BASU :** Janata Government ?

**RAO BIRENDRA SINGH :** Immediately after that. It was not Janata, I do not agree with my hon. friend.

Probably it was something else. It may be Chaoudhury Government,

(Interruptions)\*\*

(Rao Birendra Singh)

I do not even remember the the names of the Ministers at that time.

(Interruptions)\*\*

The difference of 21.4 per cent in 1980 and after this Government has come into power within four years we have reduced this difference between the manufactured and agricultural goods to —brought it down to— 5.5 per cent. Is this not an achievement? Have we not been bringing about parity between manufactured goods and agricultural produce? That should satisfy you. But if you go on talking about this disparity, I would certainly like to take your suggestions if you can tell me how to achieve it. But you have to think of the consumer and the producer at the same time.

He has mentioned about Andhra Pradesh not getting a loan of Rs. 10 crores from the Central Government. We wanted to help the State Government to carry out its own primary duty of providing market support to tobacco growers. But the fact is that they did not want this loan of Rs. 10 crores. That only shows that they were not interested in the welfare of the tobacco growers but they simply wanted to malign the Central Government on one account or the otherwise, why should a State Government refuse to take a loan from the Central Government? I think, there also Mr. Chitta Basu's sympathies are misplaced.

He has put three questions. He knows very well that these three questions will get a negative reply and yet he has to speak about them.

About reviewing our policy regarding prices, our policy is well considered as the results have shown. We have already changed the terms of reference

of APC to take into account the terms of trade. That was done in 1980 after this Government was formed and not during your times. He wants APC to be re-constituted. APC works on very sound economic, scientific methods. It cannot be made into a punchayat or a local body, where each member is pulling against the other. We have to get the considered opinion of experts. We have seen in the past that if the Members are too many or even out of them even one or two start acting irresponsibly, then it will create a confusion. In that case, we will not be able to take decisions and people will misunderstand the Government decisions. The scientific basis will be lost in public eyes. Therefore APC has to be composed of experts and responsible people. They are accountable to Government and Government is the Government of the people. We also pay due attention to the opinions of hon. Members of Parliament. You are part of the Government whether you sit this side or that side. We consult you. We always consider your opinion. We take all views into account before taking a decision. As I have said time and again, APC is only an advisory body. APC does not take the final decision. Decisions are of the Government and Government is responsible to Parliament of the people. Therefore, I do not know why so much emphasis is there on the re-constitution of the APC.

About the appointment of a high powered committee, I do not know what sort of a high powered committee he wants. Government has a high power. This Parliament has a high power. He has quoted the recommendations of parliamentary committees and other bodies. We have all the respect for all such recommendations, we take them into serious consideration and, therefore, when the A.P.C. has been constituted by Government as a body for a specific purpose of recommending prices for agricultural produce. I do not know whether it will be possible, as some people demand from time to time, that there should be one body for recommending costs — a Cost Commiss-

\*\*Not recorded.



ion instead of Agricultural Prices Commission. I am not in a position to reply to that question but so far as my Ministry is concerned, A.P.C. has been doing commendable job.

**SHRI CHITTA BASU** : Wonderful job.

**RAO BIRENDRA SINGH** : Wonderful job if I use your words.

**श्री रामावतार शास्त्री (पटना)** : सभापति जी, यह सरकार जनता को आंकड़ों के जाल में फसाने में बहुत प्रवीण है। आपको सरकार और स्वयं आप आंकड़ों के जाल में फंसा कर लोगों को अम में डाल देते हैं। आपके इस वक्तव्य से यह पता लगता है और मैं इसमें से एक वाक्य कोट करना चाहता हूँ :

“सरकार की कृषि मूल्य नीति का उद्देश्य कृषि उत्पादकों को लाभकारी मूल्य सुनिश्चित करना तथा उनके हितों की रक्षा करना है।”

मैं समझता हूँ कि इसको उलट देना चाहिए। इन की नीति किसानों को लूटने वाली है और अगर किसानों को लाभकारी मूल्य दिलाने की नीति पर नहीं चलते हैं और मेरा आरोप है कि आप ठीक इसके विपरीत किसानों को लुटवाने या स्वयं लूटने वाली नीति पर चलते हैं।

**एक माननीय सदस्य** : आपका आरोप निराधार है।

**श्री रामावतार शास्त्री** : यह बात ठीक है कि इस साल गेहूँ का उत्पादन बढ़ा है और मैं गेहूँ पर ही ज्यादा बोलूंगा क्योंकि बीच-बीच में हम आलू और ईस पर

विचार करते रहे हैं। उस समय जो विचार व्यक्त किए गए थे वे थे कि उन वस्तुओं के लाभकारी मूल्य किसानों को कभी नहीं मिले लेकिन आप का दावा रहा था कि अगर आप लाभकारी मूल्य उनको नहीं दिला पाए तो कम से कम सपोर्ट प्राइस के मूल्य आप ने उन को दिलाए हैं। इसलिए इस समय मैं उन बातों में नहीं जाना चाहता और सिर्फ गेहूँ के बारे में ही कहना चाहता हूँ।

गेहूँ का उत्पादन जरूर बढ़ा है और हमारा प्रदेश बिहार तो एक डेफीसिट स्टेट है, कम अनाज पैदा करने वाली स्टेट है लेकिन गेहूँ की उपज इस साल वहाँ भी अच्छी हुई है और इससे भी अच्छी फसल होती अगर आप उनको पानी दे देते। आप ने कोई पानी उन को नहीं दिया और नहरें सूखी हुई थी लेकिन वहाँ पानी बरसा और किसानों को कुछ पानी मिला परन्तु समय पर आने उनको घूरिया खाद नहीं दी। अगर वह खाद पूरी तरह से उनको मिल जाती तो मेरे ख्याल से और ज्यादा उपज बढ़ जाती। यह मैं आप को अपने क्षेत्र के अनुभव पर बता रहा हूँ। अब आप यह देखिए कि हमारे यहाँ स्थिति क्या है। बिहार के प्रायः सभी जिलों में पूर्णिया, चम्पारण, पटना, सहरसा, नालन्दा और नवाडा में इन तमाम जिलों में गेहूँ की कीमत गिर गई और सपोर्ट प्राइस, जो कि 152 रुपये प्रति क्विंटल है, वह भी इनको नहीं मिल रही है और मेरा ऐसा ख्याल है कि 100 रुपये से 152 रुपये प्रति क्विंटल गेहूँ वहाँ बिक रहा है यानी हमारे यहाँ गेहूँ 50 रुपये प्रति मन बिक रहा है। पता नहीं बिहार सरकार ने आपको कोई सूचना दी है या नहीं। दी होगी तो आप उसके बारे में

(श्री रामाक्तार शास्त्री)

बताएँ कि वहाँ के क्या आँकड़े हैं, वहाँ की क्या स्थिति है? बिहार में सब जगहों पर मेहूँ के मूल्यों में कमी आई है।

पंजाब में श्री आप देख रहे हैं कि पंजाब के किसानों को विवश होकर आन्दोलन पर उतरना पड़ा और कहना पड़ा कि हम बाजार में मेहूँ नहीं लायेगें पता नहीं आ जी का मेहूँ खरीदने में मुसीबत है या नहीं लेकिन हमने अखबारों में यही पढ़ा है कि वहाँ के किसान लाभकारी मूल्य मांग रहे हैं क्योंकि 152 रुपये क्विंटल में उनकी पोसाई नहीं होती, गुजारा नहीं होता। इसीलिए वे अधिक मूल्यों की मांग कर रहे हैं।

अब इसी से जुड़ी हुई बात है। कृषि मूल्य आयोग कृषिजन्य चीजों का मूल्य निर्धारण वैज्ञानिक तरीके से करता है या नहीं, हम यह जानना चाहते हैं। आप कृषिजन्य वस्तुओं, चाहे मेहूँ हो, कपास हो, तिलहन हो, जूट हो और दूसरी चीजें हो, उनकी कीमतें जब तय करते हैं तो उन पर किसान जो खर्च करता है—एक क्विंटल को पैदा करने में उसको जो खर्च करना पड़ता है उसको ध्यान में रखकर तय करते हैं या नहीं? आपको इस बात को भी ध्यान में रखना चाहिए कि किसानों का यह कहना है कि मेहूँ के एक क्विंटल उत्पादन में उनको दो सौ रुपये क्विंटल खर्च करना पड़ता है और आप उनका मूल्य तय करते हैं 152 रुपये क्विंटल। इससे जाहिर है कि उनको घाटा होगा। आपको यह बात मालूम होगी कि किसानों को विभिन्न जिन्सों के उत्पादन में प्रति क्विंटल कितना खर्च करना पड़ता है और जितना उन्हें

खर्च करना पड़ता है उसके ऊपर उन्हें आप मुनाफा देते हैं या नहीं। अगर नहीं देते हैं तो किसान अपने परिवार का भरण-पोषण कैसे कर सकेगा। जाहिर है कि वह नहीं कर सकेगा।

हम लोग किसान सभा के तहत इस बात की बराबर मांग करते रहे हैं कि किसानों को उनका हक मिले। हमारी किसान सभा के प्रो. रंगा साहब भी पुराने नेता रहे हैं। हम उनके नेतृत्व में जमींदारों के खिलाफ लड़ते थे।

यह किसान सभा 1936 में लखनऊ कांग्रेस के समय बनी थी। रंगा साहब किसान सभा के नेता रहे हैं। इसलिए मैं आपसे जानना चाहता हूँ कि आप अपने भाषण में यह जरूर बताइए कि एक किसान को अपनी उपज करने में कितना खर्च करना पड़ता है। एक किसान को जितना अपनी उपज में खर्च करना पड़ता है, उससे कम में कम 15 प्रतिशत अधिक मूल्य आप किसान को अवश्य दीजिए। नहीं तो वह अपने परिवार का भरण-पोषण आज के जमाने में नहीं कर सकता है।

आप अपने भाषण में यह भी बताइए कि उद्योग-घन्धों, कारखानों में जो सामान बनते हैं उनके मूल्यों में और कृषिजन्य वस्तुओं के मूल्यों में कितना फर्क अभी है? इस फर्क को मिटाना बहुत मुनासिब होगा क्योंकि किसानों को उद्योगों में बने सामान बहुत ऊँचे दामों में मिलते हैं, भले ही आप किसानों को खाद में छूट दे दें लेकिन और चीजों में आप उन्हें छूट नहीं देते हैं। जैसे कि सीमेंट है, ईटें हैं, मकान बनाने के दूसरे सामान हैं, उनके दाम आसमान को छूते चले गये हैं। खाने की चीजों की कीमतें

बढ़ रही हैं, तेल की कीमतें बढ़ रही हैं। कोई चीज ऐसी नहीं है जिसकी कीमत नहीं बढ़ रही हो। आपके आंकड़े इस बात को बताते हैं। इसलिए कृषिजन्य वस्तुओं और उद्योग-घन्धों में बनी हुई चीजों के मूल्यों में फर्क कितना होना चाहिए यह सरकार को भारत की जनता को बताना चाहिए। जो आप कहें उसको अमल में लाया जाना चाहिए। किसानों को उद्योगों में बने सामान जितना मूल्य मिलता है या नहीं, यदि नहीं मिलता है तो कितना फर्क है और उस फर्क को कम करने के लिए आप क्या कर रहे हैं? अब एक बात और जानना चाहता हूँ कि कृषि मूल्य आयोग के बारे में आप कहते हैं कि यह विशेषज्ञों की कमेटी है। तो मैं जानना चाहूँगा कि किसानों के विशेषज्ञ भी इसमें कोई हैं या नहीं जो किसानों की सारी परिस्थितियों से परिचित हों। कितना उनको खर्च करना पड़ता है जिसों को पैदा करने में, कितना मिलना चाहिए, इसके बारे में एक्सपर्ट्स वहाँ हैं या नहीं। किसानों के जो संगठन हैं, आल इण्डिया किसान सभा है और भी दूसरे संगठन हैं, ये लोग बराबर मांग करते रहे हैं कि किसानों का प्रतिनिधित्व वहाँ हो।

(Interruptions)

इनका प्रतिनिधित्व वहाँ होना चाहिए। स्वयं प्रोफेसर साहब भी कह रहे हैं कि वे किसानों को नहीं चाहते हैं।

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : उन्होंने ऐसा नहीं कहा है। आप गलत समझे हैं।

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : इसलिए किसानों के प्रतिनिधि आम रखिए ताकि उनके विचार भी आयोग को मालूम हो

सके। आपने कहा है कि आयोग सिफारिश करता है, तब तो हम करते हैं। तो आप वहाँ बराबर सुनते होंगे, आपके पक्ष के लोग भी बराबर मांग करते रहे हैं कि कृषिजन्य वस्तुओं की कीमत लाभकारी नहीं मिलती है आपने पार्लियामेंट का हवाला दिया है कि पार्लियामेंट तय करती है। तो अभी सब लोगों की जो राय है...।

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : पूरा गौर करते हैं आपकी राय पर भी।

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : अभी मांग हो रही है 250 रुपये क्विंटल गेहूँ के दाम होने चाहिए और आप देते हैं 152 रुपये क्विंटल। वह भी नहीं मिल रहा है। डिस्ट्रेस सेल से बेचना पड़ता है। बिहार और पंजाब के बारे में मैं जिक्र कर चुका हूँ। इन बातों की ओर आपको ध्यान देना चाहिए। आप कहते रहें और किसान को लाभकारी मूल्य न मिले तो इससे काम नहीं होगा। आपने जिक्र किया है कि कई चीजों के भाव निर्धारित किए गए हैं। यह बात सही है लेकिन उनको मिलता कहाँ है। आपने कहा है कि डिस्ट्रेस सेल हो जाता है तो खरीदने लगते हैं। तो जहाँ इस तरह की स्थिति है वहाँ आप क्या व्यवस्था कर रहे हैं। बिहार में आपने क्या व्यवस्था की है जहाँ डिस्ट्रेस सेल में गेहूँ बिक रहा है। उसको आप खरीदें। जहाँ गेहूँ की पैदावार समय से पहले हो जाती है जैसे बंगाल में, तो वहाँ के किसानों को तो नुकसान नहीं हुआ क्योंकि जो दाम तय हो गया था, उससे कम नहीं मिला उससे ज्यादा ही मिल गया, लेकिन अब जब बाजार में गेहूँ आया है और डंप हो गया है तो इस वक्त ऐसी व्यवस्था की आवश्यकता है की कीमतें नीचे न गिरें।

(श्री रामावतार शास्त्री)

इसके लिए आपने कौन-कौन से उपाय किये हैं और वे उपाय कारगर हो रहे हैं या नहीं। खरीद हो रही है या नहीं या बेचारा किसान तबाह होता रहेगा और आप कहते ही रहेंगे। इससे काम नहीं चलेगा।

जो-जो मैंने प्रश्न उठाए हैं उनको मेहरबानी करके मन्त्री महोदय बताएं। सचमुच आपकी सरकार किसानों के लिए कुछ करना चाहती है या केवल कागज पर ही बातों को रखना चाहती है।

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : चेयर मैन साहब, शास्त्री जी ने करीब-करीब वही बातें की हैं जो पहले माननीय सदस्य कह चुके हैं और उनका जवाब भी मैं दे चुका हूँ। इनका सबसे बड़ा एतराज यह है कि ये सरकार आंकड़ों से बात करती है। अब आंकड़ों से बात न करें इनकी तरह जबानी जमा खर्च तो हो नहीं सकता।

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : मेरे कहने का मतलब यह है कि आंकड़ों के जाल में फसाकर आप लोगों को बेवकूफ बनाते हैं।

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : उन आंकड़ों को आप भी सही मानते हैं।

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : सब को नहीं, 152 रुपये वाला आंकड़ा सही माना है।

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : हम तो जो बात यहां करते हैं बहुत सोच समझ कर पूरी जानकारी हासिल करके करते हैं। सही जानकारी ब्यौरेवार पार्लियामेंट को देना चाहते हैं और उसके लिए हम पूरी तरह कोशिश करते हैं।

15.00 hrs.

शास्त्री जी तरह इधर-उधर की लाठी चलाने की बात नहीं करता।

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : मैं लाठी चलाने वाला आदमी नहीं हूँ।

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : यदि आप बिना आंकड़ों के आधार पर अपनी बात कहना चाहते हैं तो कहिए। वैसे इन्होंने भी माना है कि बिहार में इस बार काफी ज्यादा गेहूँ का उत्पादन हुआ है। मुझे इस बात की खुशी है कि किसी सही बात को तो इन्होंने माना। सारे मुल्क में, सिर्फ गेहूँ ही नहीं, अन्य फसलों में भी हमारा उत्पादन पिछले सालों के मुकाबले बढ़ा है, रिकार्ड तोड़ उत्पादन हुआ है तथा गेहूँ के अंदर तो पिछले चार सालों से लगातार उत्पादन में बढ़ोत्तरी हो रही है। मैंने अपने बयान में भी इसका जिक्र किया है कि हर साल पिछले रिकार्ड टूटते जा रहे हैं और उत्पादन ज्यादा होता जा रहा है। जैसा इन्होंने बताया, बिहार में यूरिया की कमी है, मैं मानता हूँ कि कुछ अर्से के लिए बिहार में किसानों को खाद नहीं मिल पायी। लेकिन हर साल जिस तरह से खाद की खपत और उत्पादन बढ़ता जा रहा है, यह सब सरकार की नीतियों का ही परिणाम है, शास्त्री जी व. क्रीटिसिज्म का नतीजा नहीं है। पिछले साल हमारे यहां साढ़े छ मिलियन टन की खाद की खपत के मुकाबले इस वर्ष खपत 7.8 मिलियन टन हुई है। उत्पादन का हमारा लक्ष्य 72 लाख टन था, जब कि उत्पादन 78 लाख टन हुआ है।

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : मैंने कहा था कि हमारे इलाके में लोगों को खाद नहीं मिली।

श्री राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : उसको माना कि एक बार कुछ अर्से के लिए खाद की कमी पड़ी, लेकिन दूसरी तरफ आप यह भी देखिए कि एकदम से उसकी खपत में कितनी वृद्धि हुई है और उसका क्षेत्र सरकार की नीतियों, कोशिशों, एजेंसियों के प्रचार तथा राज्य सरकारों के कृषि विभाग द्वारा किए गए प्रयत्नों को जाता है। इसके साथ साथ किसानों की सूझ-बूझ को भी जाता है कि उन्होंने हमारी बात को माना और हमारी खपत बढ़ी। कहीं वक़्त पर खाद न पहुंचने की वजह से जरूर दिक्कत हुई होगी, लेकिन हमारी सरकार ने फौरन उसका इंतजाम किया। एक हफ्ते के लिए बिहार में यह कठिनाई आई, मैं उस वक़्त बिहार में ही था, और हालत को सुधारने के लिए तुरन्त कदम उठाये।

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : नहीं आप वहां बाद में पहुंचे।

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : शायद शास्त्री जी के बहकावे में आकर, इनकी सलाह से या कुछ आर्गेनाइजेशन की ओर से किसानों को कहा गया कि वे अपना गेहूं मंडियों में न लायें। हमने पहले भी बार-बार कहा है कि यदि किसान मंडियों में बाकायदा तौर पर अपना गेहूं नहीं लाएगा तो सरकार की ओर से उसका अनाज ठीक वक़्त पर खरीद कर बाहर ले जाने की जो व्यवस्था की जाती है, उसमें रुकावट आयेगी तो उससे किसान का ही नुकसान होगा। क्योंकि मंडियों में अगर एकदम से ग्लट आ जाता है और जैसा कुछ आर्गेनाइजेशन ने पीछे एलान भी किया कि एक हफ्ते तक मंडियों में गेहूं मत लाओ और उस दौरान गेहूं की आमद कम हो गई और परिणामस्वरूप

वाद में ज्यादा अनाज आया तो हमें बन्दो-बस्त में दिक्कत पेश आती है। जब किसान का माल एकदम से नहीं उठेगा, उनको एक दो दिन इन्तजार करना पड़ेगा तो उनको भी दिक्कत आयेगी।

(Interruptions)

There has been some delay in arrival in mandis. But there is now more arrival in mandi i. e. after one week.

पंजाब की मण्डियों में इस बार जितना गेहूं आया, वह पिछले सालों की तुलना में बहुत ज्यादा है।

15.02 hrs.

[SHRI F. H. MOHSIN  
in the chair]

इस साल 7 मई तक पंजाब की मण्डियों में 8 लाख 50 हजार टन गेहूं आया, जोकि पिछले साल की इसी अवधि में आये 4 लाख 81 हजार टन के मुकाबले बहुत ज्यादा है, लगभग दुगना आया है। हमने 8 लाख 50 हजार टन में से 8 लाख 45 हजार टन की खरीद अब तक कर ली है जिसका मतलब है कि जितना गेहूं अब तक पंजाब की मण्डियों में आया हमने उसका 99 प्रतिशत भाग खरीद लिया है। इससे साबित हो जाता है कि गेहूं भी खूब आया और खरीद का इन्तजाम भी अच्छा चला। इसी तरह से हरियाणा में भी पिछले साल की निम्न दुगने के करीब अनाज आया है।

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : आपने पंजाब से बाहर गेहूं के ले जाने पर रोक लगाई हुई

(श्री रामावतार शास्त्री)

हे जिसकी वजह से बाहर गेहूं नहीं जा सकता और आपके पास आ रहा है।

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : ऐसी कोई रोक हमने नहीं लगाई है, हमारी नीति इस मामले में बिल्कुल साफ है, उसमें ऐसा कोई बैन नहीं है। लेकिन गेहूं अगर व्यापारी खुद ही बाहर न ले जायें जो उसमें सरकार क्या करें। इसलिये कि हर जगह गेहूं का मंडार काफी है। बाहर से भी गेहूं आया है ताकि कंज्यूमर्स को दिक्कत न हो, गेहूं के भाव शोर्टेज की वजह से बढ़ने न पायें। इसलिये गेहूं कहीं और ले जाकर मुनाफा कमाने की गुंजाइश नहीं है।

रही यह बात कि ए.पी.सी. में ऐक्स-मर्ट्स होने चाहिये...

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : किसानों के ऐक्सपर्ट्स।

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : वह तो हम और आप हैं और यहां सदन में बहस कर लेते हैं। वहां ऐग्रीकल्चरल इकोनामिस्ट चाहिये। तो ए.पी.सी. में 2 ऐग्रीकल्चरल इकोनामिस्ट्स है—एक चेयरमैन और एक मेम्बर। यह दोनों यूनिवर्सिटीज से आये हुए हैं।

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : डा. जेड. ए. अहमद थे जो रीयल किसान थे।

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : आपको भी अगर मौका मिल जाए शास्त्री जी, तो आप लीडर के तौर पर काम करेंगे।

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Members of Parliament are expected to know everything rather.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : Yes, Sir. I quite agree with you.

*\*\* (Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN ; Prof. Ranga, my difficulty is, in the call-attention, other Members will not participate.

राव बीरेन्द्र सिंह : रंगा जी की बात पर तो हम हमेशा ध्यान देते हैं चाहे वह वक्ता से बोलें या वेबकत बोलें, मौका बोलने का देते या न देखें, क्योंकि यह बुजुर्ग हैं हमारे। आप भी ध्यान देते हैं और हम भी ध्यान देते हैं। इनकी मुनते है।

*(Interruptions)\*\**

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Halder, the point is call-attention notice.

*(Interruptions)\*\**

MR. CHAIRMAN : No. He gives him lot of respect. He is one of the most-respected Members of the House.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : Therefore, we give all attention to what Prof. Ranga says.

Naw, I am coming to the point made by Shri Ramavatar Shastri since it is a call-attention motion.

*(Interruptions)\*\**

MR. CHAIRMAN : If there is anything wrong, I will go through the record. But I don't think there will be.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : Sir, I have got the information—not for all commodities—but for certain major agricultural commodities. I have already said that for wheat, our projected cost of production for this year, present crop, is Rs. 120 to 125 per quintal in Punjab and Harayana. But in Bihar, it may be slightly more or may be less. I do not have the figure. In U.P. it is slightly higher.

For paddy, in Orissa, it is quite low. It is Rs. 113 per quintal for the present year. In Andhra Pradesh, it is estimated to be Rs. 120 per quintal for paddy. In Tamil Nadu, it is somewhat higher.

Mr. Shastri pleaded for at least 15% margin of profit. Actually, it is more than that, on the price basis of prices fixed.

If the cost of production for Punjab and Haryana where maximum procurement takes place is Rs. 120-125, at the announced price of Rs. 152 the profit is nearly 20% and not 15% or 10%. They are giving them much higher profit.

(Interruptions)

That should satisfy Shri Ramavatar Shastri. We are doing all that we

could. If there are any places where wheat is selling at less than the price fixed, then I will request him to give information to my hon. colleague Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad who will take it up.

SHRI RHMAVATAR SHASTRI : Do you have any information now ?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: We have information. We have no reports at present that in any Mandi in Bihar wheat is being sold at a price lower than Rs. 152 fixed by the Government. But I am sure my colleague will take it up again and take necessary steps to rectify the position if anywhere what is not selling at the Government fixed price.

15.12 hrs.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM THE SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Committee on Absence of Members from the Sittings of the House in their fifteenth Report have recommended that leave of absence be granted to the following Members for the periods mentioned against each :—

1. Shri Qazi Saleem	23rd February to 6th April, 1984
2. Shri D. Pattuswamy	22nd December, 1983 and 23rd February to 17th April, 1984
3. Shri L. S. Tur	21st and 22nd December, 1983 and 23rd February to 19th April, 1984
4. Shri Ananda Gopal Mukhepadhyay	2nd March to 21st April, 1984
5. Shri K. B. Choudhari	1st March to 27th April, 1984
6. Shri P. V. G. Raju	18th April to 4th May, 1984