

12.04 hrs.

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY SPEAKER

**Constituting a parliamentary committee to look into the functions of Fertilizer Industry in the country**

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, during the discussion on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Agriculture, a number of members had expressed their anxiety with regard to the increase in fertilizer prices. While replying to the discussion, the Minister of Agriculture had *inter alia* assured the House that a Parliamentary Committee would be set up to look into the functioning of the fertilizer industry.

The Minister of Agriculture accordingly wrote to me on October 8, 1991, requesting me to constitute such a Committee.

I am now happy to announce that a Committee consisting of 11 members-7 from this House nominated by me and 4 from the Rajya Sabha nominated by Hon'ble Chairman-has been constituted under Rule 254 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha. Their names are:

## Lok Sabha

1. Shri Prataprao B. Bhosale-Chairman
2. Shri Digvijaya Singh
3. Shri Ayub Khan
4. Shri P. C. Chacko
5. Shri H. D. Devegowda
6. Shri Shanker Singh Vaghela
7. Shri Saifuddin Choudhury

## Rajya Sabha

8. Shri Bindeshwari Dubey

9. Shri Vithalrao Madhavrao Jadhav

10. Shri Som Pal

11. Shri Viren J. Shah

The terms of reference of the Committee shall be-

- (i) to review the existing method of computation of the Retention Price for different manufacturers of fertilizers; and
- (ii) To suggest whether there is any scope for reducing fertilizer price within the existing scheme of things, or whether a new methodology for fertilizer pricing should be evolved without causing undue strain to the exchequer, and at the same time assuring fair prices to the farmers and a fair return to the manufacturers.

In order to constitute a meeting of the Committee, the quorum shall be one-third of the total number of Members of the Committee.

In other respects, the Rules of Procedure of the Lok Sabha relating to Select Committees on Bills, shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

The committee shall have power to regulate its procedure.

The Committee shall make a report to the Speaker, Lok Sabha, within six months.

**SHRI LOKANATH CHOUDHURY** (Jagatsinghpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is unfortunate that the Minister of Agriculture in his recent interview to the *Economic Times* has said something which is very derogatory. While referring to the Chairman of the Rural Commission on Labour, he said that the Chairman is of perverse mind. It is a derogatory remark. Of course, he has denied it

taking it into consideration. But making such a remark against the Chairman of that Commission and its Report is definitely unfortunate.

Further, the Government of India has recently decided in the Chief Minister's Conference that land distribution should be expedited and by March, all surplus land would be distributed. But at this juncture the Minister is saying that there is no surplus land and there is no land-lord. It will only help to obstruct the Government's policy that has been formulated. Therefore, through you, Sir, I want to bring to the notice of the Government and the Prime Minister that the Minister's use of such a derogatory language against the Chairman of the Commission—who was appointed by the Government—is very unfortunate. He has said so without the Government's taking the report into consideration and finalising it. This indicates the Government's inability to implement the policy that has been decided upon.

12.06 hrs.

#### RE. PRICES OF EDIBLE OILS

[*Translation*]

SHRI HARIN PATHAK (Ahmedabad): Sir, all of a sudden sale of edible oils in the open market has come to a standstill. Such a situation has been created in the country, especially in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, that edible oils are not available in the market. Through you, I would like to draw the attention of the House that last week our hon. Finance Minister Shri Manmohan Singh, the hon. Minister of Commerce, Shri P. Chidambaram and the hon. Minister of Civil Supplies, Shri Kamaluddin Ahmed held a meeting at Gandhinagar, in Gujarat. All the Oil mill owners of Gujarat were called there and in the evening they announced in a press conference that groundnut oil will be available at the rate of Rs. 38 per kg. in the open market in next three months. They also made a similar announcement in Bombay. The hon. Finance Minister is present here. I would like to tell

him that after 48 hours of that announcement edible oils are out of market in Gujarat. It is available in black market @ Rs. 50 to 65 per kg. Thousands of people in villages and cities stand in que in the early morning but they are not getting oil. Such a situation has been created even after ministerial announcement.

12.07 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Through you, I would like to request the Government to formulate a special oil policy and release oil quota to Gujarat and other states. The Government should formulate a policy under which people get oil at the rate of Rs. 38 per kg. according to their need. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE (Lucknow): Hon. Finance Minister is present in the House. (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI LOKANATH CHOUDHURY (Jagatsinghpur): Sir, the Finance Minister has to make a statement. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA (Cuttack): After the Finance Minister's announcement in Bombay, the result is like this. (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, has the attention of hon. Finance Minister been drawn to the scarcity of edible oils in the country after the announcement that prices of oil will fall oil prices after the This issue is being raised in the House and the Finance Minister is busy in gossiping. (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH): I apologise to the House; I should have been attentive. (*Interruptions*)