

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : That has already been disposed of. There can be no more mentioning of that.

SHRI V. KRISHNAMOORTHY : What is the present situation in West Bengal? Let the hon. Home Minister tell us about that.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Now, we shall take up the motion regarding the food situation.

SHRI LOBO PRABHU : I have not exhausted the 15 minutes' time given to me on this Bill. So, I may be allowed to continue tomorrow.

17-07 hrs.

MOTION RE: FOOD SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) : On behalf of Shri Jagjivan Ram, I beg to move :

"That the food situation in the country be taken into consideration."

At this stage, I do not wish to make any submissions. We have already circulated a document on the food situation and after listening to the views of hon. Members we shall be replying to the debate.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Motion moved :

"That the food situation in the country be taken into consideration."

There are some substitute motions, and hon. Members who want to move them may do so now.

SHRI RAM SEWAK YADAV (Barabanki) : I beg to move :

"That for the original motion, the following be substituted, namely :—

"This House, having considered the food situation in the country, is of the opinion that the Government of India have utterly failed in solving the food problem." (1)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The next motion is in the name of Shri Bibhuti Mishra. He is not present here now.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी (बलरामपुर) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, मेरा निवेदन है कि सदस्यों को सूचना नहीं है कि अभी खाद्य की बहस होगी। इस समय जो सदस्य सदन में नहीं हैं उनके संशोधन बाद में ले लिए जायं।

SHRI D. N. PATODIA (Jalore) : It will not be proper to deny him the chance to move the amendment later.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : बाद में ले लिया जाय।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : With the permission of the House, I shall consider it.

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : I have no objection.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Substitute motions Nos. 3, 4 and 5 are in the names of Shri D. S. Patil, Shri Yashpal Singh and Shri Bhogendra Jha, and those Members are not present here.

SHRI RAMAVATAR SHASTRI (Pa tna) : I beg to move :

"That for the original motion, the following be substituted, namely :—

"This House, having considered the food situation in the country, is of the opinion that the Government has completely failed in finding a solution to the food problem and in order to find a solution, this House, recommends that—

- (a) monopoly procurement should be enforced in all the States in view of bumper crop this year, cultivators should be given remunerative prices for their produce, and the wholesale grain trade should be nationalised immediately;
- (b) banks should be nationalised in order to exercise control on and bring down rising grain prices;
- (c) immediately stringent action should be taken against profiteers and grain-hoarders and a country-wide effective movement should be launched to unearth hoarded grains;
- (d) fair prices of foodgrains should be fixed; and

(e) agricultural production should be stepped by effective enforcement of land reforms.' (6)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Substitute motion No. 7 stands in the name of Shri Kanwar Lal Gupta. He is absent.

SHRI BENI SHANKER SHARMA (Banka) : I beg to move :

"That for the original motion, the following be substituted, namely :—

This House, having considered the food situation in the country, is of the opinion that the only way to resolve the food crisis in the country is to increase the production of foodgrains and as such recommends that—

- (a) an intensive programme of irrigation be undertaken by diverting all available resources for the coming two years for the completion of the incomplete big dams and their distributory canals and installations of a network of tube-wells both electrically and diesel operated, throughout the length and breadth of the country; and
- (b) zonal system of distribution of foodgrains be abolished and free movement of the same allowed." (8)

SHRI SHIVA CHANDRA JHA (Madhubani) : I beg to move :

"That for the original motion the following be substituted, namely :—

"This House, having considered the food situation in the country, is of the opinion that nothing short of the village ownership of land, the application of modern scientific know-how and the village panchayats would solve India's food problem." (9)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Substitute motion No. 10 stands in the name of Shri Samar Guha. The hon. Member is absent.

All the substitute motions which have been moved are now before the House.

SHRI D. N. PATODIA : I had also sent in a substitute motion yesterday.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I do not find it here. We shall check it up.

SHRI NARENDRA SINGH MAHIDA (Anand) : Food is a very important subject and unless we pay serious attention to this problem, no matter how we progress in other fields, it will take many many years for us to be self-sufficient. Our Government, I am sorry to say, in early stages paid more attention to industrial development. It was only after shortage of food and droughts started prevailing that our attention was drawn to the necessity of growing sufficient food in our country.

As a person whose main income is from agriculture, I am pained to see that we are not helped in the manner we ought to have been. The first necessity of an agriculturist is water for his fields. Secondly, he requires fertilisers. After growing food, he requires stability of prices. These are his main essentials. But we are not able to irrigate our fields. Even though I live on the banks of the Narmada, I am not able to draw water from the river. I have to depend upon rains for watering my field. This is the position even in a prosperous State like Gujarat. As long as this situation continues, I do not think we shall be self-sufficient in food for a long time. Unless we gear up our irrigation projects to fulfil the premises we have made to our agriculturists, I see no future for the country on this front. Particularly in my region, unless the Narmada project comes into operation, I see no hope for my State to be self-sufficient in food. As it is, today in my State, agriculturists grow more of cash crops, about 52 per cent; only 48 per cent of the cultivation is of food crops. This is the state of affairs in one of our progressive States. Many other States are keen to advance and increase the production of foodgrains, but for lack of water they are not able to go ahead. Water is a must for every field and unless that is attended to, no amount of shouting here or outside will work.

The second necessity is of fertiliser. This is also fulfilled only in a very small way. We have very few fertiliser factories. They have just begun to operate.

The greatest demand of the farmer after he has grown foodgrains is a proper price for his produce. We have organisations of industrialists, workers, tailors, cobblers; we have political organisations, but in this

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country there is no organisation of farmers yet. जगत के तात किसानों को कहते हैं परन्तु किसानों की दशा वही रही है बीस साल से। Their condition has not improved to the extent we want it in the country. India is in the rural areas; it is not in Delhi, Bombay or Calcutta. Unless rural India is uplifted first in the matter of food production, we shall take a long long time for improvement. So all the political parties, if they want that rural India should improve, should see that there are strong organisations of farmers. I have many times talked in this House also that there should be a rural forum, a forum for the improvement of seeds and the conditions of farmers. In my own party we have a socialist forum, in other parties also there are different forums, but I am sorry we have yet to have a rural forum. I had talked with the former M.P., Shri Dhebar. He and I were the lone voices in this House in favour of a forum for the farmers.

A small organisation has just sprung up, and it has to take roots, but merely having a forum in this House alone is not enough. There should be a powerful forum to tour the States and pay countrywide visits to educate the farmers.

If the farmer wants to buy a bullock, he cannot raise money. We have some co-operative banks, but they too give loans only once in a year, and the farmer has to wait for months and months to get money. So, this State of affairs has to be very radically changed, and unless we meet these basic needs, I still think the question of self-sufficiency will take nearly 25 years, because farmers are alone voice, they have no press, they have few representatives even in this House, and unless this food front is brought to the notice of every member of the House, I do not think there is hope during my life time.

I have applied for a well to be dug in my farm. Even the banks have refused to grant me money, and I hope this new measure, what we call socialisation of banks, will compel these banks to give credit to the farmers first. The industrialist gets a loan very easily from a bank, but a farmer has still to cry for a loan, and I am glad that

the Government has now taken measures for the socialisation of banks which I understand is for the benefit of the farmers so that the farmers can get the money as quickly as possible just like an industrialist. These are some of the measures which we are going to take, and I hope all the sections of this House will understand that this measure is to uplift the farmers.

In rural India, there is need for houses, streets, industries etc., but I will not touch them, but food is one of our principal targets. It should be the principal target in our plan. Food means not only wheat for rice, food means jowar also, food means grass also, because unless we grow grass for our cattle, the cattle will not survive. To whichever village you go, you will find that the grasslands are decreasing, in every village the grasslands are being acquired for industry, roads, canals or railways, and if this shortage of, grasslands is not attended to, our cattle will suffer. We have the largest amount of cattle in the world, but the milk yield is so small that we remain still a poor nation as far as our dairy is concerned. So, along with the food problem, so many other problems have also to be noted.

The forests also come under food, because the forest attracts rainfall, and I am sorry to miss in our House a great exponent of forests like the late Mr. Chatterjee. He had made a very informative speech and had drawn our attention to the need of forests. The forest wealth has also to be increased. These are the problems which have to be attended to. The forests have been cut off. Wherever you go, the industries dams or mines, the forests have been destroyed by these projects. Forest is also a necessity because it helps to grow food and it also helps to draw more of rainfall. These are some of the basic needs. Probably, I will talk for hours and hours if I have to relate what are the needs of our agriculturists in this country. Unless these needs are fulfilled in a quick way and in an increased pace, I will have to wait for a long time for the development of my small village. Even in 20 years, my village has not got the facility of drinking water. Not even now. We have not got roads even. Unless these needs are fulfilled—

AN HON. MEMBER : 20 years of Congress rule.

SHRI NARENDRA SINGH MAHIDA :
Whoever it is; probably you may be ruling.
But these are the basic needs.

AN HON. MEMBER : He is saying
it there.

SHRI NARENDRA SINGH MAHIDA :
I have been saying the same thing from this
side or that side. It does not make any
difference. What I have been saying is that
unless rural India is improved, no progress
can be made. Now, people are leaving the
villages. Why should they live in the villag-
es when they cannot make two ends meet ?
There are much less attractions in a village,
not only for making a living but for educa-
tional purposes and for facilities of city life.
Every village is missing it. Those who get
themselves educated also go away to the
towns. And there is a tremendous amount
of landless labour in the villages. Labour
has to be harnessed. The greatest difficulty
in our country is that lately we have not yet
produced some leaders on this side or that
side who would harness the millions and
millions of our villagers to constructive work.
We also go there at the time of the elections,
and educate them on politics; we educate
them how to vote. But we do not educate
them as to how to harness their strength in
this country. The greatest need in our
country is that we should harness the human
labour or the human intelligence that is
available in the villages. What scheme has
my party to offer or any of your parties
have to offer to the villages? That is impor-
tant. Show me a single party which has a
constructive way in this respect. For get
about Mahatma Gandhi for the moment.
In the modern sense, when people are going
away from the rural areas, the problem is,
how to harness their strength and utilise them
in a constructive way. (Interruption)

AN HON. MEMBER : The DMK.

SHRI NARENDRA SINGH MAHIDA :
All parties will say, but let them put it into
practice. (Interruption)

श्री जार्ज करनेजीब (बम्बई दक्षिण) :
हमारी पार्टी है ।

श्री रवि राय (पुरी) : हम लोगों का
साहित्य भी पढ़िये ।

SHRI NARENDRA SINGH MAHIDA :
Let us, Members of Parliament, select
a village round about Delhi and do construc-
tive work there. Let us say that Members
of Parliament who can talk can also create
something. What are we creating ? (Inter-
ruption)

SHRI RAJARAM (Salem) : We in
Madras have been working in a successful
way, and we get more yields in our area.

SHRI NARENDRA SINGH MAHIDA :
You might have been successful but my
area has not improved to that extent which
you claim. (Interruption) We must all
apply our mind to constructive work. This
House and the other House may be free to
express their views, but unless we go directly
into the villages and get ourselves into touch
with the rural problems, there is no use.
Our old Prime Minister used to say that we
are in a cowdung age and we have now come
up to the cycle age. My point is, we have
not gone further. Even my friend Shri
Kedaria's area has not also progressed from
the cowdung age. We may talk about atom
bombs and so on. But I will conclude by
saying that we must improve rural India.
Whichever party is brought into power
(Interruption)—I have no objection if you
remove the Congress party, by democratic
means and any of you can come to power—
we must lift up these rural areas. (Interrup-
tion). The real constructive way was shown
to us by a great leader who had set his foot
in the villages of Mahatma Gandhi. We
have completely forgotten all those ideals;
even my party has forgotten them. I have
no hesitation in saying that unless we go
back to the villages, improve their lands,
supply them with water for their fields and
complete the irrigation projects, we may like
in Delhi, our villages will die. Educated
villagers say, why should we grow more
food when we can get more price for cash
crops ? In my area, people grow more cotton
than foodgrains. So, I want the Govern-
ment and this Parliament to see that more of
foodgrains are grown. Some sort of legis-
lation or compulsion has to be brought in
where by every farmer grows food for his
own necessity first. If the farmer himself
is not self-sufficient, in food, how can we
expect the average citizen in the urban area
to the self-sufficient ? So, serious attention
has to be focussed on this. I request that

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there should be a forum for farmers, a forum for the upliftment of rural areas. I look forward to the day when we in this House, leaving aside party ideologies, can get together and if the Government is not listening to us, hammer the Government and make them implement the irrigation projects, the fertiliser projects, projects for providing drinking water, etc.

With these words, I take note of this motion and I hope the Government will pay more and more attention to the upliftment of the rural areas.

SHRI KANWAR LAL GUPTA : I may be allowed to move my substitute motion I want to go, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I will take it as moved.

SHRI KANWAR LAL GUPTA : I beg to move :

That for the original motion, the following be substituted, namely :—

"This House, having considered the food situation in the country, recommends that—

- (a) more quota of wheat and rice should be allotted to Delhi for rice-eaters and labourers;
- (b) more quota of sugar should be allotted to Delhi;
- (c) arrangements should be made to supply coarse grains adequately to Delhi; and
- (d) restriction on the movement of foodgrains except wheat and rice should be removed immediately in view of the bumper crop this year with the ultimate aim of abolishing food zones." (7)

SHRI P. K. DEO (Kalahandi) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, agriculture is the basic industry in this country. It can give us adequate food for the people, raw materials for industry and full employment. Even then, food shortage has become a chronic phenomenon in this country bringing in its trail periodical famine and misery.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : He may resume his speech on the next occasion.

17-29 hrs.

GRANT OF DEARNESS ALLOWANCE TO CENTRAL GOVERNMENT PENSIONERS

श्री जार्ज फरनेन्डीज (बम्बई-दक्षिण) :
उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, यह जो पेंशनर्स का मामला है उसको इस सदन में पिछले कई वर्षों में कई बार उठाया गया है। पिछले पांच सालों में, मैं ने अभी पता लगाया, 68 बार इस सदन में पेंशनर्स के मसले को ले कर प्रश्न पूछे गये हैं और 30 या 40 बार अलग अलग मामलों की बहस के समय इसको उठाया गया है। मगर अफसोस इस चीज का है कि इतनी बार इस मसले पर यहां प्रश्न पूछते हुए भी और वहस चलाते हुए भी, सरकार का ओर से पेंशनर्स के मामले में कोई भी दिलचस्पी नहीं दिखलाई जाती है।

एक ही मांग पेंशनर्स की ओर से की जाती है कि जो पेंशन उन्हें दी जाती है, उसके साथ उन्हें मंहगाई भत्ता दिया जाये। मंहगाई भत्ता किस रूप में दिया जाये, इसके बारे में कोई ठोस बात भले ही न आई हो, लेकिन इस के बारे में उनका कहना इतना ही है कि जब चीजों के दाम बढ़ते जाते हैं और दूसरे कर्मचारियों को आप मंहगाई भत्ता देते हैं, तो उन लोगों ने कौन सा पाप किया है कि आप उनको मंहगाई भत्ता देने से इन्कार करते हैं। पिछले पांच छः सालों में इन पेंशनरों के प्रतिनिधिमंडल किसी न किसी तरीके से जो तीन प्रधान मंत्री हो चुके हैं उनसे मिलते रहे हैं। 1961 के सितम्बर महीने में प्रधान मंत्री श्री जवाहरलाल नेहरू से पेंशनरों का शिष्टमंडल मिला था। उसके बाद शास्त्री जी से मई 1965 में उनके कुछ प्रतिनिधि मिले थे। अभी सितम्बर 1966 में श्रीमती नेहरू गांधी से पेंशनरों का एक प्रतिनिधिमंडल मिला था और उसने खास तौर पर अपने इस मंहगाई भत्ते की मांग रखी थी।