

excise duty rebate on the extra production made during the lean months has been allowed.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY : The total milling capacity in our country is ten million tonnes. We need 8.5 million tonnes of sugar. Last year the production, according to the Minister, was only 5.9 million tonnes...

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR : It is not production. Carryover.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY : I want to know whether the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Agriculture have any coordination between them as to how much production of cane we require. The farmers are burning their cane and the Commerce Ministry is importing sugar from outside. I want to know whether the Ministries of Commerce and Agriculture will have coordination and also whether they are going to announce the prices one year ahead so that the farmers can grow more and more to meet the requirements.

SHRI A. K. PANJA : There is coordination between the Ministries of Commerce and Agriculture. Otherwise, how can we achieve this? This is a request for action. As regards the second part for the next year we have made it Rs. 17/-. It has already been declared. This year it is Rs. 16 5.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM FYARE PANIKA : So far as the problem of sugar is concerned, it is an established fact that the farmers produce more in the year in which they are given incentive. The information this year from all the States is that in spite of the fact that some of the mills in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar have paid sugarcane price more than what the State Government or the Central Government have fixed, the area under sugarcane has not increased. Will the Hon. Minister give an assurance in the House that after giving due consideration to the inputs, the Government would announce remunerative price for the next year well in advance so as to encourage the farmers to grow sugarcane in order to save foreign exchange on the import of sugar?

[English]

SHRI A. K. PANJA : Reasonable price to the farmers is one of the items. There are various other factors involved so that price of sugar is controlled and availability made. So far as payment to farmers is concerned earlier it was Rs. 14 which was increased this year to Rs. 16.5 and for the next year we have made it Rs. 17/-. We have already declared it. The main reason for shortfall is drought which we had in the last two years. This year we are picking up and the production is good.

Consumer Protection Guidelines

*84. **DR. G. VIJAYA RAMA RAO :** Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether at the recent Seminar on Consumer Protection held in Delhi on 20-21 January 1986, Consumer Guidance Society of India had suggested for adoption Consumer Protection Guidelines :

(b) if so, the action proposed thereon;

(c) whether Government propose to give special consideration to consumer safety, supply of goods, and services of mandatory standards;

(d) whether for ensuring the above, effective consumer laws and consumer education through mass media, will be introduced;

(e) whether consumer protection priorities will be given to food, water and pharmaceutical; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI A. K. PANJA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (f). A Statement is given below.

Statement

An All India Seminar on Consumer Protection was held in New Delhi on 20-21 January, 1986 to discuss various Administrative, legal and Monitoring measures for consumer protection including Draft Model Law on Consumer Protection to be adopted by the States/Union Territories. The seminar

was attended by the representatives of Central Ministries/Departments concerned with consumer protection laws, State Governments and Voluntary Consumer Organisations. The measures initiated by the Government were welcomed by the participants who also made certain suggestions for consideration by the Government.

The Consumer Guidance Society of India which also participated in the Seminar, made following important suggestions :

- (i) Creation of a separate Ministry/ Department of Consumer Affairs with Consumer Protection Council and the Directorate of Consumer Protection.
- (ii) giving more powers to the Voluntary Consumer Organisations.
- (iii) inclusion of public utility services under the purview of the model law.
- (iv) compulsory ISI certification of all consumer products.

Department of Civil Supplies as a nodal Department for Consumer Affairs is coordinating with other concerned Central Departments on all matters relating to consumer protection.

Delhi Administration has set up a Directorate of Consumer Affairs under the Department of Food and Civil Supplies as a nodal agency to deal with the various problem of consumer. In Delhi, well established Voluntary Consumer Organisations have been given certain powers of inspection and acting on complaints of consumers.

While the Central Government is taking action on various suggestions made at the Seminar, it may not be possible to include public utility services in the Model Law, as this may lead to multiplicity of authority, since the concerned Departments of public utility have appropriate machinery for redressal of public grievances.

The Government accords high priority to consumer safety, supply of goods and services of mandatory standards. To ensure safety and health of consumers, the Government has enforced compulsory quality control and certification for 93 products. In addition,

the Government proposes to introduce mandatory quality control in a phased manner for items involving health and safety of consumers, such as, household electrical appliances, GLS Lamps, milk power, condensed milk, oil burning pressure stoves etc.

Consumer Protection Laws e.g., Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act, Essential Commodities Act, are being amended to provide better protection to the consumer.

Mass-media is undertaking programmes on consumer education. To protect consumer's interest, priorities are accorded to essential items, like food and drugs

DR. G. VIJAYA RAMA RAO : Adulteration in our country is more. The official report itself says that compared to other countries the adulteration percentage is between 20-30 in our country. This is because of ignorance and illiteracy among the rural people. The mass media like the Press, TV and AIR are not playing proper role to root out illiteracy in this country. I would like to know from the Minister whether they will encourage formation of consumer organisations throughout the country and also financially help consumer organisations to function throughout the country? Secondly, will they permit the consumer organisations to monitor mass media like TV and AIR?

SHRI A. K. PANJA : So far as voluntary organisations are concerned we are encouraging voluntary organisations to come forward provided they fall within certain parameters which are known to the Hon. Members. In fact, various voluntary organisations have been helped in this regard. So far as availability of funds is concerned, the funds are also provided to those who satisfy the conditions laid down. Further so far as consumer protection is concerned a model law is on the anvil. It is being considered from all angles taking into account the various views expressed by various organisations and also some State legislatures. The model law is being drafted taking into account the various views so as to make it proper and good law.

DR. G. VIJAYA RAMA RAO : What about monitoring the advertisements in TV and AIR?

SHRI A. K. PANJA : I am sorry I forgot the last part. We are taking the help of mass media organisations not only for monitoring but also making consumers conscious about their rights. The main point is to make our unwary consumers, that is, the purchasers, conscious of their rights and also to bring them to such a conscious level that they ask for their rights from the sellers and ask for proper things from the sellers.

DR. G. VIJAYA RAMA RAO : What are the specific measures that the Government have been adopting specially in regard to the legal system, safety regulations and implementation of national standards to ensure that products are safe for us, including consumer education by way of giving vital safety information in respect of products, such as, electrical appliances, drugs, etc. ?

SHRI A. K. PANJA : There is the ISI specification and some of these items are in the list. There is a long list. If the Hon. Member wants, I can give him. I need not go into the list of items because the Hon. Member already knows about it.

For these items it has been made compulsory that ISI marking must be there on each of the listed item so that the consumers are protected or at least they look at the ISI marking while purchasing the items.

So far as the law is concerned, I have already said that Anti-Adulteration Act and the M. R. T. P. Act are now being applied for the purpose of enforcing the rights of consumers so that the health and life of the people, that is, the consumers, are not affected.

SHRI HAROOBHAI MEHTA : One of the areas in which consumers are cheated is retail price. Will the Government come out with a proposal requiring retail price to be printed on each commodity sold in this country ? The Hon. Minister must be aware that in countries like the U. S. S. R. retail prices are printed on each commodity so that the consumers get each commodity at the same price whether in Moscow or in the remotest village. Is there any proposal to print the retail price on each commodity so as to serve the interest of consumers and they are not cheated.

SHRI A. K. PANJA : At present on every specified package we are giving the weight so that the consumers are protected from getting commodities of under-weight and do not fall a victim of getting commodities of less weight. So far as mentioning of the price is concerned, on each item which the consumers purchase, the proposal is worth considering and we will look into it. However, in some specified listed items of package price is also printed.

Delay in setting up of currency note press at Panagarh (West Bengal)

***87. SHRI SATYAGOPAL MISRA :** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry has given up the proposal for setting up of a currency note press at Panagarh, West Bengal;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) if not, the reasons for delay in implementing the proposal ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) An Officer on Special Duty has been appointed on 31.8.85 for this project. M/s. Metallurgical and Engineering Consultants (India) Ltd. have been engaged for preparation of Feasibility Report. They have submitted a project profile on 31.1.86. Action is being taken to depute a team to visit a few countries abroad for selection of process technology and choice of machinery. Feasibility report will thereafter be prepared for facilitating investment decision.

SHRI SATYAGOPAL MISRA : Sir, my question has not been fully answered. In my question, I have asked the reasons for delay in implementing the project. But no answer has been given to this specific question. The idea of setting up a currency note printing press at Panagarh, West Bengal, was initiated during the year 1984. Now, we are in 1986. In view of the fact that the country is facing acute coin shortage, will the Government have a time-bound programme and inform