

[*Translation*]

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this wheat-based nutrition programme has been a bad experience, particularly in Maharashtra where Weevil infected and sub-standard wheat is being supplied to the children. I would rather suggest to prepare a scheme of supplying packets of groundnut and grams, which are rich in proteins and vitamins, along with jaggery. There is no scope of malpractice in this scheme. May I know whether Government will give consideration to this scheme?

[*English*]

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: I have noted the suggestion. But I want to clarify that this scheme was started because of the wheat stocks available in the country and instead of exporting it, we thought that the children of the country should benefit from the extra production of wheat. That is why the scheme was introduced. We pay fifty paise per head for production of something with the wheat which we supply.

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: Next question No. 600.

SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT: My name was also included in Question No. 599.

MR. SPEAKER: You were not present, Sir.

[*English*]

You were missing at that time. You have just come on the platform when the train has just left.

### Artificial Sweeteners for Diabetic Patients

600. DR. G. VIJAYA RAMA RAO: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether artificial sweeteners are no longer considered either safe or appropriate in dealing with diabetics;

(b) whether Government have any plan to meet this situation; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE): (a) to (c). There is no reliable evidence to prove that the use of artificial sweeteners by diabetics within permissible limits is unsafe or inappropriate.

DR. G. VIJAYA RAMA RAO: Recently, the FAO and WHO Expert Committee went into the question of safety of sacchrine and other artificial sweeteners and it was found that there was a definite cancer producing effect on the people who used them at 3 per cent and above have the diatary level. Not only that the artificial sweeteners just satisfy the tongue but the body will also crave for the sugar. This will create more hunger and the diabetics will take more food and thus it will not counter the effects of sugar. In view of this, I would like to know whether the Government will ban the artificial sweeteners and introduce some sort of an alternative for the patients.

KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE: As I have stated in my answer, there are mainly three artificial sweeteners, sacchrine, cyclamates and aspartame on which extensive studies have been done and which are generally used in most parts of the world.

As regards sacchrine, according to the recommendations of the World Health Organization, the permissible use of sacchrine in humans may be 0.25 mgs per kilogram body weight per day. The Foods and Drugs Administration USA has banned the use of cyclamates with effect from 11th September, 1970. This was followed by similar bans in some other countries, although the substance is still available in few countries. The artificial sweetener aspartame was approved by the FIDA in USA for the use both as a table top sweetener as also in liquid preparations in 1983.

DR. G. VIJAYA RAMA RAO: In rural areas, the Saccharin is used in some of the sweets and these sweets are being adulterated by the Saccharin. Similarly, the soft drinks and some of the beverages are also being adulterated with the saccharin. So, I would like to know from the Minister whether they will have some checks for such sweets and soft drinks.

KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE: Sir, we have received requests in the past for the permission to allow the use of saccharin in other items of food like, Ice-cream, Icy-candy, processed Supari, Pan Masala, Biscuits and many other things like these. Sir, a special group under the Chairmanship of Director General was constituted to consider this particular problem and at one stage it was suggested that saccharin may be allowed in some of the products. But keeping in view the suggestion of the Food Additive Sub-Committee, the Sweetner was not allowed. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI MADAN PANDEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, her reply indicates that attention is being given to the use of Saccharin only. I know that there are certain herbs in Indian forests which are not likely to prove harmful if used as saccharin. I made use of one such herb and I enjoyed its sweetness without any side-effect. I would like to know from the hon.

Minister whether the government propose to start a research work in this field in order to find out herbs which could be used as saccharin, in stead of depending on U.S.A. regarding the safety in the use of saccharin.

SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI: Mr. Speaker Sir, I am afraid she might go to forests at his behest.

MR. SPEAKER: Bairagiji, what sort of trap you are referring to?

SHRI MADAN PANDEY: May I know whether the Government propose to set up a committee of Ayurvedic experts to conduct such a research work if the same has not been undertaken so far?

MR. SPEAKER: It is enough now.

SHRI MADAN PANDEY: More than 10 crores of people in the country are diabetic. Do you propose to consider this matter?

KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE: The hon. Member has asked a Question about diabetes and in that he is suggesting the use of herbs in place of saccharin. I would like to tell that our Ayurvedic experts conduct research in this regard. But nothing concrete has come out which I may mention for your information. But the experts will continue their efforts to find out some such alternative and make it available to the people.

[*English*]

#### **Water charges against Calcutta Metro**

\*601. SHRI GADADHAR SAHA†:  
SHRI AMAL DATTA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Calcutta Municipal Corporation has submitted a bill to Metro