

17.30 hrs.

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

Cultivation of Long Staple Cotton

SHRI S. R. DAMANI (Sholapur) : I am thankful to you to give me time to raise this important matter. The point that cotton is one of the most important cash crops has not been looked after in the manner as it deserves. The result is that cotton production in the country has remained stationary since the last 8 years. Whatever targets the Government has fixed, the actual production has not come upto the targets. In our country we have great potentialities to increase the production but that requires some more strenuous efforts. In its absence, what is the result? To-day we are importing cotton worth Rs. 100 crores of rupees every year and since the last 10 or 15 years we are importing every year such a big amount of cotton. This Rs. 100 crores represent 20% of the last years adverse trade balance with foreign countries. It is a very big amount. Therefore, I think Government should consider it very seriously and take some measures so that we can produce sufficient cotton in the country to meet on demand.

Besides I will say that by increasing the normal production of our cotton we will also be able to export cotton and can earn more than Rs. 100 or Rs. 200 crores of foreign exchange every year. There is that potentiality in the country. Therefore, this is a very important subject and I think the hon. Minister will look into this.

17.32 hrs

[Shri Vasudevan Nair in the Chair].

Coming to the potentialities, in 1951 Government allowed expansion of the textile industry. That time the total number of mills was 378. It increased to 638 in 1968, an increase of 70%. The total number of spindles in 1951 were 11 million. To-day in 1968 it has increased to 17.22 million spindles, an increase of about 56%. Cloth production in 1951 was 4700 million metres. It has gone to 8000 metres, an increase of 70%. Yarn production in 1951 was 591 million kilograms. It has gone upto 950 million kilograms, an increase of 61%. Cotton consumption has also gone

up from 35.78 lakhs bales in 1950-51 to 61.66 lakh bales in 1967-68 an increase of about 73%. Government has been fixing targets for increasing the cotton production but they largely remained unfulfilled. In 1960-61 the target was 65 lakhs bales but the actual production was 56 lakh bales. In 1964-65 the target was 66 lakh bales but the actual production was 60 lakh bales. In 1965-66 it was much worse. Against the target of 70 lakhs bales, production was only 56.08 lakh bales. This year the actual production is 59 lakh bales. We have fixed the target for 1973-74 at 84 lakh bales. Can we achieve this target with today's production at 59 lakh bales only? I am confident that if Government takes suitable measures, right now it should not be difficult to get the targeted production. But it requires action to increase the production to this level. If it is neglected or proper action is not taken, the farmers who are to benefit will not get the benefit. Also the textile industry will not get the benefit and have to depend upon imported cotton at higher prices.

It is a very important matter and this should be looked into very seriously.

In respect of cotton, the actual area under cultivation in this country is 1/4 of the total world area under cotton. But our production of cotton actually is only 1/10 of the world. In USA their acreage under cotton is 10 million acres, whereas we have got 20 million acres. In 10 million acres, they produce 90 lakh bales and in 20 million acres, we are producing only 56 lakh bales. Please see the difference.

Some people say that the Indian cotton price is very high in the world. Cotton price is very high, I agree. But it is so because the cost of production in India is very high one to the low yields. For example, in America they produce 60,000 lbs. in 100 acres and if you take the value at Rs. 2.50 per lb. they will have a return of 1,50,000 whereas in our country in 100 acres they get about 11,400 lbs. and at the rates of Rs. 3.00 per lb. the return will be about Rs. 35,000. In America the farmers get the value of Rs. 1,50,000, but here our man gets the value of Rs. 35,000 only on the same area. Our cost of production, therefore, is higher, in this country.

As such, farmers are not getting the full benefit of their labour and it will con-

[Shri S. R. Damani]

tinue to be so unless the per acre production is increased. Therefore, it is very essential that the per-acre productivity should go up.

Now I want to give you certain examples to show how some experiments to raise per-acre yield have been very successful and the production has gone up.

Under the Government's package programme, certain experiments were carried out in certain selected villages. In the case of the Virk Khera village in Punjab the production was as high as 652 lbs. per acre. Similarly, in the case of another village, namely, Sadasinghwa in Punjab the average yield was 587 lbs. In respect of another village, namely, Sarkarsamakulam village near Coimbatore in the South, the record yield in 1967-68 was 1430 lbs. per acre. The Government, after applying all the modern scientific methods have achieved this high record of 1430 lbs. per acre.

Therefore, I submit, there is ample scope for increasing the per-acre yield and by increasing the per-acre yield the cotton growers will be benefited. The country will be saved of the loss of foreign exchange of save Rs. 100 crores which we are spending every year for import of cotton and we will be able to earn foreign exchange because at present there is a shortage of cotton in the world.

Therefore, it is very essential that Government should give immediate attention to increase the per-acre yield. We should take steps to produce on a large scale the high-yielding strains and distribute them. We should extend irrigation facilities, because at present only 1/5 of the area—that is about 3.5 million acres is having the benefit of irrigation and the rest of the 16 million acres depend upon weather conditions. Also, we should give credit facilities to cultivators for buying fertilizers, better seeds, pesticides, etc. Today there is need for greater research in respect of varieties of high-yielding seeds.

At present research on cotton is entrusted to a section of ICAR. Research was formerly looked after by the Indian Central Cotton Committee and that Committee has worked wonderfully. Many seeds have been introduced which proved successful I do not mean to say that this Committee should be reconstituted to do this work,

but I think that Government should create some more research centres exclusively for cotton. According to some official agency there is a scheme by which if Government could spend Rs. 60 crores in a period of five years, the production will go up and then we will not only be meeting our own requirements, but we can also export and earn valuable foreign exchange. This will mean only an outlay of Rs. 12 crores a year. Compared to the amount we spend on importing cotton, this not a big amount. Why not we take this opportunity to earn foreign exchange by exporting lakhs and lakhs of bales of cotton? My suggestion, therefore, is that this scheme should be taken up so that the country becomes self-sufficient. My second suggestion is that immediately some other measures and also required to be taken. Today upto 40 counts global cotton is also used. We have sufficient cotton in our country to spin 40 count yarn. Government can prohibit the use of global cotton upto 40 counts and thus can give incentive to farmers to grow more cotton because of the resulting large demand.

My next suggestion is that long-staple cotton should be produced in this country in a much bigger way. Today we are short of it. Sufficient quantity is not produced in the country. Therefore, I suggest that the excise duty on cloth and yarn upto 60 counts made out of Indian cotton should be less and those produced from foreign cotton should have a higher excise duty. In this way, Government can give incentive to produce more long staple Indian cotton and also in this way our cotton production can be increased due to the increased demand. Having said that, I want to emphasize that Government should give some incentive to farmers if we want to become self-sufficient in cotton. Government should take up this matter very seriously and I hope by this method we will be successful in attaining higher production per acre.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE): Mr. Chairman, I know that Hon. Member Shri Damani takes considerable interest in textiles and naturally in the raw-materials which are required for

textiles, mainly, cotton. Government is aware of the fact that Cotton is a very important crop, not only from the point of view of income to the farmer as a cash crop, but also from the point of industrial economy for our country.

Textile industry is one of the premier industries of our country. We are proud of the fact that not only we are in a position to meet our requirements as far as textiles are concerned, but we are one of the important exporters of textiles. That is why the production of cotton assumes considerable importance from this angle.

Hon. Member Shri Damani has made the contention that cotton production has not increased since the post-Independence period.

SHRI S. R. DAMANI : I said from 1960 onwards.

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : I wish to submit that it is not correct to say that production of cotton is not increasing our country. In fact in the immediate post-Independence period, when we started our First Five Year Plan, the production of cotton in this country was only about 28 lakh bales. But now the production has reached 47.62 lakh bales in 1965-66-49.73 lakh bales in 1966-67 and 55.62 lakh bales in 1967-68. From these figures, it is very clear that production has been increasing from the beginning of the First Five Year Plan and even after 1960. But I appreciate that our per acre yield as compared to many countries in the world is low. But Hon. Members should appreciate as to what is the reason for this. We grow cotton in about 2 crores of acres of land.

But out of this land only about 16 per cent is irrigated. That means 84 per cent is such that cotton is grown under rain-fed conditions. Naturally, the vagaries of the monsoon to which this country is subject create a lot of difficulties. Under rain-fed conditions it is not possible to have higher yields.

But take the case of Punjab where the cotton is mainly irrigated. The per-acre yields in Punjab are far higher than in Maharashtra which is one of the important cotton-growing States in our country. So, if proper irrigation facility is provided, it would be possible for our country to attain as high yields as elsewhere in the world.

And as Shri Damani has pointed out rightly, the farmers in our country are second to none in world as far as hard work, ability to adopt new techniques etc. are concerned. He himself had pointed out how individual farmers in our country had attained higher yields. So, our farmers are very good in this. The only drawback is this. The irrigated acreage of cotton has to be increased.

Take the case of Rajasthan, for instance. Rajasthan's dry climate is most suitable; it is pre-eminently suitable for growing cotton. Suppose the Rajasthan canal starts operating, then the Rajasthan farmers will get water from the Rajasthan canal on a large scale; then ideal conditions would be provided for growing cotton, not only ordinary cotton but even long staple cotton.

Shri Damani had mentioned that we were importing all types of cotton. That is not true. In fact, we are importing only cotton staples of 1.16" and above. That is, only long staple cotton is imported into our country by and large. Even the figures of import are not increasing year by year. In fact, even in 1952-53, we were importing about 6 to 7 lakhs bales. In one year thereafter we went to the extent of importing 9 lakhs bales. But the trend of import is not increasing. In fact, despite the fact that the textile industry has expanded and our production of textiles has increased, the figure of import of cotton is not increasing. In 1966-67 we imported about 7.75 lakhs bales, while in 1967-68 we imported about 7.72 lakhs bales and in 1968-69 upto 4th January we imported 67,000 bales, and about 3.5 lakhs bales have been released from global cotton. We are also negotiating with the USA under PL-480 for purchase of further quantities. Our effort is as far as possible to keep our requirements of import to the minimum and to see that necessary steps are taken in our country to increase our own production of long staple cotton.

It is encouraging to note that just as in the case of foodgrains where our scientists working in the field of research have achieved very good results in evolving new strains, similarly in the case of cotton, our scientists are almost on the point of succeeding in evolving new strains. For instance, they have now evolved MCU-5, a strain which yields as high as 1900 k.g. of

[Shri Annasabib Shinde]

kapas per hectare, as compared to the average yield under our Indian conditions of 108 or 114 k.g. per hectare. Its staple is 1.36" and its count is 60. Similarly, we have evolved a new strain called Hybrid-4, which yields almost 30000 k.g. per of kapas per hectare, and its ginning outturn is 34 per cent and its spinning capacity is 60 counts. Similarly, Sujata is another new strain which has been evolved and this yields about 3000 k.g. of kapas per hectare, and its staple length is 1.4" and its spinning capacity is 100 counts. I can mention the names of new strains which are being evolved and which are under trial by our scientists.

I must mention here the Punjab Agricultural University which is one of the institutions which are making a very valuable contribution in evolving new strains. We have embarked on a coordinated research project on cotton, and we expect to spend about Rs. 56 lakhs over this project, and I am quite confident that in the times to come we shall succeed on this front too. But the effort has to be made on all sides.

The provision on plant protection measures is also very important in respect of cotton. The general approach of Government is not to provide subsidies, but in view of the importance of cotton in our economy, we are proving certain subsidies for plant protection for cotton.

Similarly, we are also providing some subsidy for providing equipment for plant production measures. There is a centrally-sponsored scheme which the Centre is financing over and above the State plan ceiling. Irrigation facilities are gradually expanding.

With all these measures, I am quite sure that in the years to come it should be possible to reduce our requirement of imported cotton to the minimum extent. A target of 80 lakh bales production has been fixed by the end of 1973-74. I think there is nothing disheartening in what is happening in the field of cotton production and as far as planning and actual performance in the field is concerned.

I am thankful to Shri Damani for raising this discussion. As I said in the beginning, cotton has a very important place in our economy. With the ce-

operation of hon. members, the industry, farmers and scientists, I am confident that within the next decade we shall make a very significant progress in this field.

श्री शिबचन्द्र झा (मधुबनी) : मंत्री जी ने बताया कि काटन का प्रोडक्शन 1960 से बढ़ा है। तो मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि एकरेज में बढ़ा है कितना और क्वान्टिटी में पर एकड़ यील्ड में कितना बढ़ा है? और यह जो बढ़ा है तो क्या यह बात सही नहीं है कि एट दी कास्ट आफ फूड ग्रेन लैंड पर बढ़ा है? यदि हाँ तो कितना बढ़ा है?

दूसरा सवाल मेरा यह है कि हिन्दुस्तान में जो काटन प्रोडक्शन है क्या वह फुली मीडर्नाइज्ड है। यदि हाँ, तो कहाँ कहाँ पर काटन पिकिंग मशीनें काम में आ रही हैं। और अगर मीडर्नाइज्ड नहीं है तो सरकार की क्या योजना है उसको मीडर्नाइज्ड करने के लिये?

तीसरा सवाल यह है कि कोम्पारेटिव बेसिस पर काटन का प्रोडक्शन हो यह स्कीम कहीं पर हिन्दुस्तान में चल रही है? यदि नहीं, तो सरकार इस और क्या कार्यवाही कर रही है।

चौथा सवाल यह है कि 1968 में कितना फोरेन एक्सचेन्ज का खर्चा काटन इम्पोर्ट के लिये विजाबिस 1967 के मुकाबले किया गया?

श्री बेवराव पाटिल (यवतमाल) : इस देश में काटन का उत्पादन बढ़ाने के इस बारे में चर्चा उठायी गई है। जैसा अभी बताया गया कि ग्रन् के बारे में जैसे स्वावलम्बी होने के बारे में तय किया गया है वैसे ही कमर्शियल क्राप्स में काटन उत्पादन बढ़ाने के लिये चौथी पंचवर्षीय योजना में विशेष जोर दिया गया है। कपास के उत्पादन में सवा तीस प्रतिशत तक की वृद्धि करने का लक्ष्य है, और वर्तमान उत्पादन 60,62 लाख गांठों का है और इसको बढ़ाकर 80,85 लाख गांठ करना है। उत्पादन बढ़ाने के लिये स्कीम्स तैयार की गयी हैं और इनके सुलभ-

बिक किसानों का सम्बन्धी भी दी जाती है प्लान्ट प्रोटेक्शन के लिये और कॅमिकल के लिए.....

MR. CHAIRMAN: No speech now, only a question. At least today, I want to conclude the half-hour discussion in half-hour.

श्री देवराव पाटिल : यह सब करने के बाद भी कपास का उत्पादन क्यों नहीं बढ़ा, इसलिए मैं यह बात कह रहा हूँ कि पर एकड़ उत्पादन क्यों नहीं बढ़ रहा है कपास का। जैसा मंत्री महोदय ने कहा कि करीब तीन हजार किलोग्राम हैक्टर तक हम गये हैं। लेकिन जिस जिस साल उत्पादन बढ़ा है उस साल पहले साल की काटन की प्राइस ध्यान में लें तो पता लगेगा कि जिस साल में लांग स्टेपिल को अच्छा मूल्य मिला है उसके दूसरे साल में कपास का उत्पादन बढ़ा है। जनवरी से अप्रैल तक जो प्राइस रहती है, जब हंगामा था कि लूटा जाता है किसान को, इस साल जो प्राइस थी जनवरी में उससे 25 फीसदी प्राइस अप्रैल में बढ़ गई है। किसान के पास जब माल होता है अच्छी प्राइस उसको मिलती नहीं है और जब माल निकल जाता है किसान से तब प्राइस बढ़ जाती है। इसलिये क्या सरकार इस बात पर विचार कर रही है कि जैसे सरकार ने मनाब के बारे में सहायक मूल्य, सपोर्ट प्राइस की स्कीम चलायी है ऐसे ही कपास के लिये, जो लांग स्टेपिल काटन है जिसका मूल्य संसार में जो उसका दाम है उससे कम भारत में है, उस लांग स्टेपिल काटन के लिये सरकार कोई सपोर्ट प्राइस स्कीम चलाने का विचार करती है ? इसलिये मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि कपास का सहायक मूल्य निर्धारित करने का सरकार के पास कोई प्रयोजल है। क्योंकि कपास की फसल अच्छी हो या बुरी किसान ही चाटे में रहता है। इसके बारे में इस मंत्रालय में कपास उत्पादन को बढ़ाने के लिये सहायक मूल्य देने के बारे में सरकार क्या कार्यवाही कर रही है ?

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री (पटना) : मंत्री जी ने ठीक ही बतलाया कि कपास का क्या महत्व है देश और जीवन के लिये। इसको ध्यान में रखते हुए मैं दो, तीन सवाल पूछना चाहता हूँ।

अतारांकित प्रश्न संख्या 1921 का जो जवाब 13 मार्च को दिया गया उसमें बताया था कि सुपीरियर लांग स्टेपिल काटन 1965-66 में 195 हजार हैक्टर में हुई। लेकिन 1966-67 में 185 हजार हैक्टर में हुई। तो इस कमी का क्या कारण है।

फिर उसी तरह से पैदावार में सिलसिले में लांग स्टेपिल काटन में बारे में है कि 1965-66 में 111 किलोग्राम एक एकड़ में पैदा हुआ था जो कि 1966-67 में 107 किलोग्राम हो गया। इसका क्या कारण है ?

दूसरा सवाल मेरा यह है कि आपने बताया कि हमारे यहां आयात घीरे घीरे कम होता जा रहा है। तो इस संदर्भ में जानना चाहता हूँ कि 1965 से लेकर 1968 तक आपको कीमत में क्या अन्तर हुआ है, वहां से मंगाने में ? क्योंकि उसी कीमत पर नहीं मंगा रहे जो 1965 में मंगाते थे। दोनों कीमत में क्या फर्क है।

हमारे देश में नये क्षेत्र में कपास की खेती हो इसके लिए क्या सरकार ने कोई योजना बनायी है। और यदि बनायी है तो उसकी रूप रेखा क्या है ? और बाहर जो हम भेजते हैं उससे हमें सालाना कितनी विदेशी मुद्रा की प्राय हो रही है ?

SHRI SHRI CHAND GOYAL (Chandigarh) : The hon. Member knows very well that Ferozepur district in Punjab, especially Fazilka tehsil and a large part of Hissar district in Haryana are admirably suited for the production of long staple cotton ; he also referred to the vast potentialities in Rajasthan. In that context, what are they going to do with regard to the early finalization of the Rajasthan canal ? What are they going to do with regard to popularising new high yielding varieties which are the result of research work in various universities because sometimes the research work done successfully does not reach the

[Shri Shri Chand Goyal]

farmers? Thirdly, the rate of purchase tax on cotton has been increased in the past years from two to three per cent and similarly excise duty on fertilizer had been increased in this year's budget. Will these increases not prove to be a disincentive for the production of cotton?

18.00 hrs.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS *rose.*—

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am very sorry. We are strictly following the rules.

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE :

Sir, Shri Ramavatar Shastri, while putting his questions, asked whether there has been any increase in yields and acreages, and at the same time, he gave some figures and showed as if year after year, the yields are going down and the acreage is also going down. As I explained in the beginning, in this country, almost 84 per cent of our cotton is dependent on rain for its cultivation. So, the seasonal nature such as rainfall, etc., has much to do with acreage and yields. He should try to appreciate it because as I mentioned earlier only 16 per cent of our cotton-area is irrigated. Where cotton is irrigated, yields are appreciable and are comparable to those in the advanced countries in the world. For instance, in Maharashtra, where cotton is grown under rain-fed conditions, the yields are very low: only 78 kg. per hectare. But in Punjab, the yields are 333 per hectare. So, irrigation and seasonal rainfall make a difference as far as yields are concerned. Of course, there are other factors. That means, if the farmers use improved techniques, the improved techniques can be used if those measures suit the soil. There are limitations. We are also making efforts and are trying to evolve new strains and new seeds which could be supplied on a large scale. These are some of the efforts which we are taking to increase the acre yield and production in general.

Shri Shiva Chandra Jha referred to the facts about production and asked whether the per acre yield has increased during the last 15 to 20 years. I may submit for the information of the House that when we started the First Plan, in the year 1952-53, per acre yield, rather, the yield per hectare

was round about 75 to 80 kgs. But now, the yields have gone up. In the year 1965-66, the average yield per hectare was 108 kgs.; in 1966-67, 114 kgs., and in 1967-68, 124 kgs. So, the trend is upwards. It is not that we are satisfied with this trend, but it shows that the trend is definitely upwards. The yields are not going down.

Shri Jha also asked about the role that co-operatives play in the marketing of cotton. In fact, it is the effort of the Ministry to encourage cotton ginning process, and especially to encourage co-operative spinning mills, etc. That has been our effort. I need not go into the details of it. They have been successful in many parts of the country.

As far as modernisation is concerned, this is in fact a question which is beyond the purview of this Ministry. But the Government is attending to that problem, because the modernisation of the textile industry is of vital importance, and unless we try to modernise the textile industry, it would be very difficult, in the international competition, to make cloth available at the cheaper rate to the consumers themselves.

Shri Patil put a question whether the Government intends to give a support price in the interests of the farmers. As an enlightened farmer himself, Shri Patil should know that it is the policy of the Government, and in fact, we have been announcing every year the support prices. It is a matter of argument whether this particular price is reasonable or whether it can be 10 per cent or more. That can be a point for argument, but as far as the Government's approach to this matter is concerned, we try to help the farmers by fixing the support prices. When Shri Patil and some of his colleagues took the initiative last year that the ceiling on cotton price should be removed, the Government responded to that last year and the ceiling had been removed last year. We would like to have a support price. That is our approach not only in regard to cotton but in regard to many other commodities also.

Now, Shri Goyal raised some questions but they have been covered in my reply to

some of the other questions which had been put. 18.04 hrs.

I am thankful to the hon. Members for having raised this discussion on the floor of the House.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, May 13, 1964/Vaisakha 23, 1891 (Saka).
