

LOK SABHA

Thursday, December 6, 1962/Agra-haryana 15, 1884 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Twelve of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

REPORTED SCARCITY OF KEROSENE OIL

Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur): Sir, under Rule 197, I call the attention of the Minister of Mines and Fuel to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:—

The reported scarcity, hoarding and black-marketing in kerosene oil in Delhi and other places.

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Mines and Fuel (**Shri Hajar-navis**): Government have seen reports which have recently appeared in the press complaining of shortage of kerosene in Delhi. The stocks at the main depot in the city are adequate and in fact larger than in normal times and there is likely to be no shortage of kerosene in the Delhi area for distribution. The situation about which reports have appeared in the press is due partly to the fact that some companies have had to reduce their capacity of supply to the population on account of the need to build up stocks of ATF—which, I submit, Sir, is the same as superior kerosene—for defence requirements and also due to panic buying by a certain section of the population in order to hoard it and

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also partly due to the attempts on the part of some anti-social distributors to make unconscionable profits. One reason for the shortage of kerosene for distribution appears to be due to the difference between sales tax in the Union Territory and the sales tax in U.P. While there is no sales tax on kerosene in the Delhi area and in the Punjab State, the State of Uttar Pradesh levies 7 per cent sales tax on that commodity. Therefore, some purchasers in Delhi clandestinely remove the kerosene from the jurisdiction of Delhi area to the areas in U.P. The Chief Commissioner of Delhi has issued an order prohibiting the export of kerosene except on permits outside the Union Territory. It is proposed to make hoarding of kerosene an offence as also charging price in excess of that prescribed by the Government. The Delhi Administration will take steps to bring to book the offending distributors and will ask for deterrent punishment. It is also intended to open sufficient number of additional retail shops at which kerosene will be sold in bottles at prescribed prices. This arrangement will enable the consumers to obtain their required supply at control prices.

Kerosene is a deficit product from the point of view of internal production and has to be imported. While the volume of imports will not be reduced, it would enable us to conserve foreign exchange if consumption is reduced by resorting to alternative fuels. Kerosene is partly used for cooking purposes in the country. We have built sufficiently large stock of coal which will enable the people to use coal instead of kerosene for cooking purposes. While adequate stocks will be maintained to meet the demands of kerosene in the country which are continuously increasing,

[Shri Hajarnavis]

Government will appeal to the public to cooperate by not making demand for kerosene in excess of their minimum requirement and substitute it by an alternative fuel.

There were also some reports of local shortages of kerosene developing in some parts of North Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. These shortages arose because of the pressure of defence movements on the railways and on account of the insufficiency of tank wagons needed to move the kerosene out of Calcutta. This situation has now been remedied and stock position in these areas has improved.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: May I know whether it has been brought to the notice of the hon. Minister that a bottle of kerosene oil, which was being sold at 28 nP in Delhi, is now being sold at 56 nP, and the same thing is prevailing almost in all the States now?

An Hon. Member: Shame.

Shri Hajarnavis: There are some reports to that effect and that is why energetic steps will be taken to see that supplies are maintained at control prices.

श्री यशपाल सिंह (कैरना) : क्या सरकार का ध्यान इस ओर गया है कि पंजाब गवर्नमेंट ने अमृतसर के एक व्यापारी को पन्द्रह दिन की सजा दी है जो कि दुगने दाम पर मिट्टी का तेल बेच रहा था। दिल्ली में भी दुगने दाम पर मिट्टी का तेल बिक रहा है तो क्या यहां ऐसे लोगों के खिलाफ डिफेंस आफ इंडिया एक्ट के मातहत कार्रवाई की जायेगी ?

श्री हजरतबीस : उन के खिलाफ जरूर कार्रवाई की जायेगी ।

श्री बागड़ी (हिसार) : यहां पर मिट्टी के तेल की कीमत जो २८ न० पैसे थी वह ५६ न० पैसे तक बढ़ी । इस दौरान में उन ब्लैक मार्केटर्स के खिलाफ गवर्नमेंट

को स्टेप लेना चाहिये था जिन्होंने तेल की कीमत बढ़ाई । मैं मंत्री महोदय से पूछना चाहूंगा कि ऐसे लोगों के खिलाफ कोई कदम उठाया गया है या नहीं और इस कानून के तहत दिल्ली में कोई गिरफ्तारी की गई है या नहीं । अगर नहीं, तो इस की क्या वजह है और उन को गिरफ्तार क्यों नहीं किया गया ?

श्री हजरतबीस : अगर इस के बारे में किसी जगह शिकायत की गई होगी तो जरूर उस की तहकीकात की गई होगी ।

एक माननीय सदस्य की गई है या नहीं ?

अध्यक्ष महोदय : सवाल यह है कि क्या गवर्नमेंट के पास कोई इत्तला है कि इस जुर्म में किसी के खिलाफ कोई कार्रवाई की गई है, या किसी को गिरफ्तार किया गया है ।

Shri Hajarnavis: If what has been done is an infraction of law, then a complaint.....

श्री बागड़ी : अंग्रेजी में मेरी समझ में नहीं आता ।

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members should have patience to hear the whole answer.

जो कुछ माननीय मंत्री कहेंगे वह मैं माननीय सदस्य को समझा दूंगा बाद में ।

श्री हजरतबीस : मैं हिन्दी में बतला देता हूं । अगर कहीं पर कानून के खिलाफ काम किया गया है तो उस के बारे में रिपोर्ट की जानी चाहिये ...

अध्यक्ष महोदय : जब माननीय सदस्य सवाल साफ तौर पर करते हैं तो उसका जवाब भी उसी के अनुसार होना चाहिये । सवाल यह है कि किसी के बरखिलाफ कोई कार्रवाई आज तक की गई है या नहीं ।

श्री अशोक चौधरी (श्री के० बे० मालवीय) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, पिछले दो तीन दिनों में यह मालूम हुआ है कि जगह जगह लोग मेंहगा मिट्टी का तेल बेच रहे हैं और इस की बड़ी सख्त डिमाण्ड हो गई है । जब दिल्ली के चीफ कमिश्नर से इस मामले में तहकीकात की गई तो मालूम हुआ कि कुछ डीलर्स और डिस्ट्रिब्यूटर्स महंगा तेल बेच रहे हैं । उन के खिलाफ तहकीकात हो रही है और मुझे उम्मीद है उन में से दो चार जरूर पकड़े जायेंगे तीन चार दिनों में । मैं हाउस को यकीन दिलाना चाहता हूँ कि जैसे ही हमारे पास सबूत आ गया, उन लोगों के खिलाफ बहुत सख्त कार्रवाई की जायेगी ।

श्री रघुनाथ सिंह (वाराणसी) : कल अखबार में एक पिक्चर छपी है जिसमें मालूम होता था कि एक एक दूकान के सामने १००, १०० आदिमियों की भीड़ है । मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या तेल की शार्टेज है या कम तेल सप्लाइ हो रहा है ? क्या आप की तरफ से पूरा तेल दिया गया है ?

श्री के० बे० मालवीय : जैसा बयान में कहा गया है आम तौर पर तेल की शार्टेज बिल्कुल नहीं है । आम तौर पर जितना तेल रोज रखा करता है दिल्ली में, उस से ज्यादा स्टॉक है । लेकिन चूकि महीने का पहला हफ्ता है और लोगों के पास पैसा ज्यादा है इसलिये वे स्टॉक करना चाहते हैं और ज्यादा से ज्यादा तेल अपने पास रखना चाहते हैं । मैं जनता से अपील करना चाहता हूँ कि वह ऐसा न करे । ज्यादा तेल घर में रखने से कोई फायदा नहीं है । उस पर फारेन एक्स्चेन्ज भी खर्च किया जाता है । इस लिये अगर वे ज्यादा मांगेंगे तो हम दे नहीं सकेंगे और उनको तकलीफ होगी आज कल की हालत में ।

दूसरी बात यह भी सही है कि जब ज्यादा मांग हो गई तो जो डीलर्स हैं उन्होंने भी मुनाफाखोरी शुरू की । इस के बारे में तहकीकात हो रही है और मैं समझता हूँ जो लोग इस तरह की मुनाफाखोरी कर रहे हैं उन के खिलाफ जैसे ही सबूत मिल गया उन पर मुकदमे चलाये जायेंगे और बहुत सख्त कार्रवाई की जायेगी ।

Shri D. C. Sharma: (Gurdaspur): May I know if this rise in price is due to collusion between the wholesalers and the retail dealers and if so, what steps are being taken to check this?

Mr. Speaker: Order, Order, Shri Shree Narayan Das.

Shri Shree Narayan Das (Darbhanga): Some time ago, the hon. Minister made a statement that there will be no shortage of this article in the near future. I would like to know what has happened in between these days that there has been scarcity in various parts of the country including North Bihar, I would like to know what steps have been taken to remove this difficulty especially so that there may not be difficulty in the rural areas.

अध्यक्ष महोदय : गवर्नमेंट के पास जो इन्तला है कि शार्टेज तेल की है या नहीं इस के बारे में तो स्टेटमेंट दे दिया गया । उसी चीज को फिर दुहराने की क्या जरूरत है ?

Shri Shree Narayan Das: What steps are being taken that this scarcity may not prevail in the rural areas especially because there....

Shri K. D. Malaviya: The most effective step that I think should be taken is, all the Members and myself and the Government should appeal to the public to consume as little kerosene oil as possible so that there may not be rush on the distributors and salesmen.

[Shri K. D. Malaviya]

The stocks are there; stocks above the normal stocks are with us and we shall try our level best to see that the stocks reach the distributor's point promptly at every place.

Dr. L. M. Singhvi (Jodhpur): I suppose the price was rising over a period of time. What agency do we have to apprehend and to prosecute such rise or when the rise is detected the persons who are responsible for the rise? Do we have a squad, or is it proposed to have a squad or a special squad for the purpose of checking rise in prices? This is only the beginning, and a very bad beginning.

Shri K. D. Malaviya: The price was not rising at any time. A bottle of kerosene was being sold at 4½ annas, even two or three or four days before. Suddenly, when there was a great rush, whichever distributor wanted to make more profit started selling it at a higher price. If people are prepared to pay more money when they have got more money in their pockets, how can we prevent them from doing so?

Dr. L. M. Singhvi: So, there is absolutely nothing that Government propose to do about it?

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath (Hoshangabad): Is the hon. Minister who has tackled the big oil and gas problems of our country with a dubious measure of success in a position to definitely tell us....

Mr. Speaker: Would this reference to the Minister make kerosene oil cheaper or available in greater quantities?

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: I referred to the ability and capacity of the Minister.

Mr. Speaker: How can the capacity of the Minister be relevant here?

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Is it not relevant?

Mr. Speaker: No, not at all.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: The Minister is a part of the Government.

Mr. Speaker: The capacity of the Minister is not in question now.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: The Minister is a part of the Government, and the administration is affected by his . . .

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. Member want to put any question or not?

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Is the hon. Minister in a position to state definitely and categorically that all malpractices in respect of this common man's fuel will be severely dealt with and crushed, irrespective of the person committing those malpractices?

Shri K. D. Malaviya: Government will try their level best to see that kerosene is sold at a fixed price, and those who contravene the rules and the laws be severely punished.

Shri Tyagi rose—

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry. I cannot give any chance to any hon. Member whose name does not appear in this notice.

श्री नवल प्रभाकर (दिल्ली करौलबाग): क्या दिल्ली प्रशामन को एसा निर्देश दिया गया है कि वह ऐसी दुकानों पर जहाँ कि मिट्टी का तेल मिलता है, उसके दाम की सूची नटकाएँ ?

श्री के० दे० मालवीय: जी, हाँ इस का फैसला हो गया है, और आजकल में ही यह सूची वहाँ टांग दी जाएगी, और जनता से उम्मीद की जाती है कि वह दाम देख कर ही तेल लेंगे और जो दाम है उससे ज्यादा नहीं देंगे।

Shri Shivaji Rao S. Deshmukh (Parbhani): May I know whether Government have received a report that a personal secretary of some Minister sent for requisitioning 14 tins of kerosene oil had to return without it?

Shri K. D. Malaviya: I have read that report but beyond that I have no information.

Some Hon. Members: We could not hear the reply.

Mr. Speaker: The reply was that he has also read that report, but besides that, he has no other information for the present.

12.13 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

FOOD ADULTERATION (SECOND AMENDMENT) RULES

The Minister of Health (Dr. Sushila Nayar): I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Prevention of Food Adulteration (Second Amendment) Rules, 1962, published in Notification No. G.S.R. 1564, dated the 24th November, 1962, under sub-section (2) of section 23 of the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954. [Placed in Library, see No. LT-625/62.]

NOTIFICATION UNDER ARTICLE 359(1) OF CONSTITUTION

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Home Affairs (Shrimati Chandrasekhar): On behalf of Shri Datar, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of Notification No. G.S.R. 1594 dated the 26th November, 1962, under clause (3) of article 359 of the Constitution, publishing amendments to Order No. G.S.R. 1418 dated the 30th October, 1962, issued by the President under clause 1 of the said article. [Placed in Library, see No. LT-626/62.]

NOTIFICATIONS UNDER SEA CUSTOMS ACT AND CENTRAL EXCISES AND SALT ACT

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Finance (Shri B. R. Bhagat): I beg to lay on the Table a copy each of the following Notifications:—

- (i) G.S.R. No. 1584 dated the 24th November, 1962, under sub-section (4) of section 43B of the Sea Customs Act, 1878.

- (ii) G.S.R. No. 1585 dated the 24th November, 1962, under sub-section (4) of section 43B of the Sea Customs Act, 1878, and section 38 of the Central Excises and Salt Act, 1944, making certain further amendment to the Customs and Central Excise Duties Export Drawback (General) Rules, 1960. [Placed in Library, see No. LT-627/62.]

AMENDMENTS TO POST OFFICE SAVINGS CERTIFICATES RULES, AND PUBLIC DEBT (THIRD AMENDMENT) RULES

Shri B. R. Bhagat: On behalf of Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha, I beg to lay on the Table—

- (i) a copy of each of the following Notifications under sub-section (3) of section 12 of the Government Savings Certificates Act, 1959, making certain further amendments to the Post Office Savings Certificates Rules, 1960—

- (i) G.S.R. No. 1458 dated the 1st November, 1962.

- (ii) G.S.R. No. 1461 dated the 1st November, 1962.

- (iii) G.S.R. No. 1590 dated the 21st November, 1962.

[Placed in Library, see No. LT-628/62.]

- (ii) A copy of the Public Debt (Third Amendment) Rules, 1962, published in Notification No. G.S.R. 1509 dated the 10th November, 1962, under sub-section (3) of section 28 of the Public Debt Act, 1944. [Placed in Library, see No. LT-629/62.]