

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: In the text of the statement which has been laid on the Table of the House I have indicated that we are waiting for the recommendations of the Study Team which visited India and after getting their recommendations it would be possible for us to identify the specific projects. Then the question of investment and our share in those particular sectors will come.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI: What are the main recommendations of the Study Team? Have they found that the market in Philippines is very good for engineering industry so far as India is concerned? Will it help us to earn more so far as investment in Philippines is concerned? By what time will they give their full recommendations?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Member to the last sentence of my statement—

'The report of the Philippines delegation is yet to be received by the Government of India'

We have not yet received it and I cannot say what the main recommendations are. But certain areas have been identified and they too particularly have been mentioned in the middle of the statement. The hon. Member can read it.

Estimated Demand for Edible Oils for 1981-82

*364. **SHRI HARINATHA MISRA:** Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated demand for edible oils for the year 1981-82; and

(b) the steps that have been taken or are likely to be taken to meet the demand so as to bring down the prices to a reasonable level?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA): (a) and (b). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b). The estimated demand for edible oils including vanaspati for the oil-year 1981-82 (November 1981-October 1982) is around 40 lakh MTs.

In order to maintain the stability in the prices of edible oils, Government have continued to meet the demand-supply gap through the import of edible oils and making them available in larger quantities to the consumers at reasonable prices through fair price shops. For this purpose, the Public Distribution System is being continually strengthened by the State Governments for the increased supply of imported edible oils. The other steps being taken are augmentation of availability of indigenous edible oilseeds/oils through implementation of an "Action Plan" drawn up by the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation; increasing the production of traditional oils, vanaspati and other non-traditional oils, taking more vigorous action towards dehoarding of stocks; enforcement of the various provisions of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, including Orders issued thereunder and of the Prevention of Black Marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980.

SHRI HARINATHA MISRA: Is it a fact that as in mid February this Year, the prices of edible oils increased by 35 per cent, over what they were a year ago, although production within the country is not reported to have come down and import from outside the country stands at a level of 1 million tonnes?

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA: This Year, certain indigenous oils and oilseeds which are used for various cooking media have registered an increase in prices for two main reasons. One is that the groundnut crop has been much below average,

particularly, in Gujarat, Rayalaseema and Telengana and, secondly, we have reduced the quantum of imported oil supply to the vanaspati industry so that the use of non-traditional oil in the manufacture of vanaspati has increased. Therefore, the vanaspati industry has started purchasing oils like cotton seed oil for the manufacture of vanaspati to replace the imported oil that was being given to them earlier. These two reasons have actually contributed to the increase in edible oil prices in the country.

SHRI HARINATHA MISRA: Is it a fact that the Government of Gujarat has imposed some sort of an informal restriction on the movement of groundnut out of the State in spite of the directive of the Government of India and, if so, is that not one of the reasons for the price hike?

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA: The hon. Member is right when he says that some kind of an informal restriction was imposed by the Government of Gujarat. But at our intervention, that restriction was removed. That did cause some price rise in the market for groundnut oil for a temporary period.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI: Are we to understand from the replies of the hon. Minister that the prices of edible oils would go on rising and the Government is helpless?

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA: If I have given that impression, I am sorry. I have not given that impression.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI: What are the positive steps taken to control the prices, to bring down the prices of edible oils?

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA: I was asked to give reasons why the prices rose which I have given. We are not helpless. We are effectively controlling the prices.

श्रीमती प्रमिला इश्वरते : अध्यक्ष महोदय, राशन की दुकानों पर एडिबल-आयल अबेलेबिल नहीं है। कल आप न बनस्पति मैन्यूफैक्चरर्स के साथ मीटिंग कर के प्राइसेज के बारे में कुछ निर्णय लिया है, लेकिन साथ ही आप ने प्रीवेन्शन आफ एडल्टरेशन एक्ट में तबदीली कर के एक नोटिफिकेशन निकाला है जिस के अनुसार 1953 में जो इण्टरनेशनल यूनिट के अनुसार 25 ग्राम विटामिन ए मिलाने के लिए मजबूर किया गया था, वह अब आप वापस लेने की कोशिश कर रहे हैं। क्या इस के खिलाफ आप के पास कन्ज्यूमर्स आर्गैनिजेशन तथा प्रीवेन्शन-आफ-एडल्टरेशन आर्गैनिजेशन की तरफ से कोई शिकायत आई है? यदि यह बात सही है तो इस के बारे में आप क्या करने वाले हैं?

श्री बिद्या चरण शुक्ल : अध्यक्ष जी, राशन की दुकानों पर बनस्पति तथा जो खाने के तेल हैं, उन की उपलब्धि साधारण तौर पर ठीक है क्योंकि राज्य सरकारें जितना खाने का तेल उठाती थीं, उन से अधिक मात्रा में ले रही हैं तथा हम को जो सूचना मिली है उसके अनुसार राशन शॉप्स के द्वारा इन की उपलब्धि पहले से अधिक सन्तोषप्रद होती जा रही है।

जहां तक विटामिन ए का प्रश्न है, स्वास्थ्य विशेषज्ञों की यह राय है कि बनस्पति में विटामिन मिलाने से कोई फायदा नहीं होता है। जब कढ़ाई में डाल कर फ्राइंग-मीडियम के रूप में उस का उपयोग किया जाता है तो उस का मूल्य शून्य के बराबर हो जाता है। इसलिए उस की कोई आवश्यकता नहीं है। इसी आधार पर स्वास्थ्य मंत्रालय ने एक नोटिफिकेशन जारी किया था। उस के ऊपर कुछ आपत्तियां आई हैं और मैं समझता हूं कि उन आपत्तियों पर विचार करने के बाद जो निर्णय लिया जाएगा, वह हमें मान्य होगा।