

SHRI A. K. ROY: I made a special reference to it. Please read part (b) of my question. It says:

"whether there is any scheme on environmental geology specifically for prevention of silting in the dams and reservoirs on which research is going on in the Indian School of Mines."

I do not put any academic or imaginary questions.

MR. SPEAKER: Do you want to answer it?

SHRI S. B. CHAVAN: Research on sedimentation and siltation in irrigation dams in most of the States is carried out by the irrigation research institutes of the respective State Governments. But if, the hon. Member would like to have a different kind of study than that carried out by the irrigation research institute, that is, some kind of correlation between geological aspects and sedimentation, certainly that aspect can be considered by the Dhanbad Institute.

Suspension of supply of sugarcane to Mills by growers in U. P.

404. **SHRI B. V. DESAI:** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether serious situation has arisen due to the decision taken by the growers in U. P. to suspend cane supply to mills.

(b) if so, when this decision was taken;

(c) whether they have refused to accept less than Rs. 30 per quintal;

(d) whether this has brought the sugar mills to standstill;

(e) if so, whether this has spread to other States also;

(f) whether this decision will greatly affect the sugar production in the country; and

(g) if so, what steps are being taken in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (KUMARI KAMALA KUMARI): (a) to (g). A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

The Government would like to re-iterate its feeling already expressed on a number of occasions that the agitation by cane growers, which initially started in Maharashtra and has subsequently been taken up in certain areas of Uttar Pradesh, is essentially of political nature. In U.P., the agitation has been started from the 7th December, 1980 with a demand for payment of a cane price of not less than Rs. 30 per quintal to cane growers supplying cane to sugar mills. The agitation has only partially affected some of the sugar factories in Western U.P. According to U.P. Government except in 9 sugar mills in Western U.P. located in the District of Meerut and Muzaffarnagar, the overall position of supply of sugarcane and the production of sugar, in the State as a whole, has been satisfactory. Even out of those 9 mills 8 are running partially and have not closed down due to the agitation. It is significant in this connection that the production of sugar by factories in U.P. upto 30.11.80 has been 92,000 tonnes as against only 83,000 tonnes upto the corresponding date last year. By 7th December, 1980, out of 28 factories in the State, 79 have gone into operation as against 74 on the corresponding date last year. The number has gone up still further subsequently and 81 have started operations. The overall picture of sugar production in the country this year is also showing an encouraging trend. The total production during the current year is of the order of 4.41 lakh tonnes upto 30.11.80 as against only 2.95 lakh tonnes in the corresponding period last year. As on 7.12.80, 213 factories in the country have started crushing operation as against 209 as on the corresponding date last year. This clearly indicates that the position both with regard to

the working of factories as well as the total production of sugar has not been significantly affected by the agitation.

Government is confident that saner counsel will prevail and the agitation will be called off and not be permitted to take such a turn leading to a law and order situation. It is understood that the U.P. Government is taking all precautions to deal with the situation.

SHRI B. V. DESAI: The statement laid on the Table of the House makes a comparison of sugar production in UP with only the previous year. It says that while on 30.11.79 it was 83,000 tonnes, as on 30.10.80 it is 92,000 tonnes. The hon. Minister takes solace from this little increase in the tonnage of production. But he has not given the figures as on 30.11.78 and 30.11.77. I would like to know whether he can supply the figures for those two previous years, because in the previous year the performance of the sugar factories in our country was not good, and that is why we are in this mess now. So, I want the comparative figures for those two years. Secondly, while replying to question No. 397, the hon. Minister was kindly enough to say that already the agriculturists and sugarcane growers have been paid very heavily and, therefore, whatever little realisation the factories get by way of small increase—while the cost of production is Rs. 5 or 6, the sugar factories are selling at Rs. 15 or 20, which is a very marginal increase, according to him—the hon. Minister was pleased to say that there is very little to be shared with the sugarcane growers. Is it not a fact that because of the fact they are unable to part with a little portion, even though the Bhargava Report is talking about 50:50, that the sugarcane is not coming to the factories. I would also like to know what is the price being paid today in U.P.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION

TION AND IRRIGATION (SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO): In UP the price paid differs from factory to factory. The system of buying sugarcane also differs from factory to factory and place to place. Some factories get sugarcane at the gate, while others purchase them away from the factory, from the farmers. As per the advice of the Prime Minister, the UP Government has advised the factories to pay a minimum price of Rs. 16 at 8.5 per cent recovery. But, to my knowledge, no factory is at present paying less than Rs. 20 per quintal of sugarcane. Certain factories are paying much higher.

The other question which the hon. Member has asked, though it does not relate to the main question, is a comparison not only with the previous years, but two years before that. That itself shows the situation now is more favourable. As I have already said in the answer, upto 30th November this year we have produced 4.41 lakh tonnes of sugar. Last year, for the corresponding period the figure was 2.95 lakhs or nearly 3 lakhs. In the year previous to that in 1978-79 it was 3.95 lakhs, a little than 4 lakh tonnes, as against nearly 4.5 lakh tonnes now.

In the case of number of factories working also we have done much better. On 7th December this year the number of factories working was 213 for the whole of India. For the previous year the number was only 209 and for the year before it was 230. In the case of UP about which the hon. Member has put the question, the number of factories working as on 8th December 1978 was 71. This year the number is 79, that is to say, 8 more factories compared to the year which the hon. Member says was a better year. Even last year 74 factories were working. I can give the figures for all the other States also, but the question does not relate to this.

As I have already stated in detail in the reply, the agitation does not have much effect on the factories in

UP. All the factories are working, except one in Daurala which is closed down. Eight factories are partially affected; intermittently they stop for a day or two when there is no cane supply and start working when the cane supplies are resumed. Therefore, the situation is not so bad as made out by the people supporting the agitation.

SHRI B. V. DESAI: The comparison which the hon. Minister was pleased to make was for the whole country. Even though there are more factories now, they are partially working today. In fact, with due respect, I would like to state that the hon. Minister has wrongly taken it as a political agitation while it is an economic one. If you want to kill a dog, you call it mad and then kill it. This is just like that. He wants to deny them by calling the agitation political. I want to know whether the Minister is prepared to change his opinion, because the demand made in the agitation is economic and not political. I would request the Minister not to delay his decision until the entire season is over. Let us not be complacent of the fact that more factories are working as compared to previous years, because they are working only partially. When there is supply of sugarcane, they work; if there is no supply of sugarcane, they do not work. In Karnataka one big factory, which was closed, has not started working even till today. At least for the next season we should not be in this mess. Therefore, I would request the Minister to intervene and see that a proper rate is paid, be it in UP or elsewhere. Let him also change his opinion and do the needful.

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister will consider this request.

SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV: I am glad that Shri Desai has very rightly advised the Minister not to be unreasonable with the farmer.

I would say that the real cause of the agitation is not political but the attitude of the Government, which is most unsympathetic to the farmers.

MR. SPEAKER: Please put the question.

SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV: I am putting the question. The hon. Minister has stated that the agitation is political. I want to refer to that. He said that it is politically motivated and it is a political agitation. I have every right to say that this agitation is due to the unsympathetic attitude of the Government.

MR. SPEAKER: You form the question.

SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV: I am forming the question. The unsympathetic attitude of the Government is very clear. The Minister mentioned even the name of the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister of UP, stating that they advised the factories to pay Rs. 16 and that the factory owners, of their own have started paying Rs. 20. That itself shows that the Government was most unsympathetic and unrealistic, while the factory owners have taken a realistic view, I would say that the Minister should not be complacent, and should not take advantage of the compulsion of the situation. You are a farmer.

MR. SPEAKER: Please put your question.

SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV: The farmers have to vacate their fields to sow wheat. Therefore, under compulsion they are supplying sugarcane to the factories. But if this situation does not improve, if they have asked that the minimum price they should get is Rs. 25/- to Rs.30/- per quintal, if the Government will not give this price, they will be facing difficulties, the country will suffer and the people will suffer. Therefore, I am asking: Will the Government consider being more realistic that even the crushers

are paying Rs. 22⁰ to Rs. 25/- ? If they are in a position to pay, will the Government advise again the factory owners to raise the minimum price of Rs. 25/- to Rs. 30/- to the cane growers?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: Sir, my hon. friend, Mr. Chandrajit Yadav, has not understood what I said. Rs 16/- was advised to be the price at 8.5 per cent recovery, and on the basis of that, it itself comes up to Rs. 19/- or Rs. 20/-, and if the recovery is higher, it goes even above Rs. 20/- as in the case of Maharashtra. Therefore, it is all according to our advice that this price is being paid. He can stick to his opinion. Of course, my friend would not be a political leader. If you can convince us, well and good, is politically motivated.

So far as this Government is concerned, we are very sympathetic to the farmers, several times more sympathetic than his Government was previously. Sir, I myself am a very flexible person, but I cannot change my opinion unless I am convinced about the genuineness of the demand. If you can convince us, well and good, we shall think further.

(Interruptions)

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as the Minister has agreed that there is a vested political interest behind this agitation, may I know from him what steps the Government has taken to curb the anti-public activities of certain vested political interests who have instigated some farmers and forced most others to create problems for the present Government ?

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I want the question.

MR. SPEAKER: I want the question is, what action the Government has taken? Part (b) of my question is: Is it not a fact that some FIRS

have been filed where the farmers have been stopped by the anti-farmer parties like the Lok Dal from taking the sugarcane to the factories?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: There have been some instances of violence against farmers who wanted to supply sugarcane. There was even, as I read in the papers, a case of a man being trampled because those people wanted to stop the farmers and they wanted to stop their tractors from bringing sugarcane.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER. Don't try to reply on his behalf.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: My friend, Mr Rajesh, is right in saying that there is a persistent effort on the part of certain political workers to see that sugarcane is not supplied to the sugar factories and that certainly is not in the national interest.

So far as this Government is concerned, we are sympathetic to the farmers' demands. We do not believe in the impression that the farmers are simple people, they can be easily misled. Therefore, we want to take no harsher measures against the farmers *(Interruptions)*. So far as our policies are concerned, we want to meet this agitation on political level, we want to make the farmers understand the real situation and we want to educate them, and we are fully sure that the farmers will not listen to the people. *(Interruptions)* No, Mr. Biju Patnaik, you won't be able to mislead them further.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Minister while giving us the figures of the factories working in reply to the hon. Member's question, gave a very rosy picture that all the factories are working. Last month, he was also good enough on behalf of the factory owners to raise

the levy price by 25 per cent. I would like to know from the Minister that if all the factories are working and we have fixed the levy price at Rs. 3.50 and the open market price or the free-sale price at Rs. 6.30 or whatever it is, why sugar is not readily available to the people and why the free sale sugar (Interruptions). Such a talkative Minister should not interfere. (Interruptions) The price ruling in the market today is between Rs. 12/- and Rs. 20/- per kilo. Why the sugar is not available in the fair price shops and why the States are not getting it and why the middle-class people are not able to get sugar today? Then, why he say that all factories are working? He gave the figure to show that maximum production is taking place and he has fixed the price. Then why the prices have been doubled? And on the basis of these prices, why is the price paid to the farmers at Rs. 30/- a quintal is not proper? If this sugar price should be at Rs. 10/- or Rs. 12/- and Rs. 3.50, then why Rs. 30/- a quintal is there?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO:
Sir, the prices for levy sugar are not fixed by the Government arbitrarily. That is on the basis of a formula laid down. The BICP is also consulted, the Tariff Commission has laid down certain norms and formulae and it is in accordance with those formulae, Rs. 3.50 has been fixed as the price on the basis of all those calculations and the price paid for levy sugar also has been fixed according to the formulae laid down and this is to enable the factories to pay higher prices for the sugarcane that is supplied by the farmer. I do not agree with my hon. friend that sugar is not available in the market. Sugar is available in the market, sugar is also being distributed through the fair price shops. Sir, the prices have also come down considerably....

AN HON. MEMBER: To Rs. 3.30 a kilo?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO:
Rs. 3.50 is the levy sugar price, but the free market price of sugar is also raised, to my mind, to Rs. 7/- or Rs. 8/-.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: Sugar is sold at 10/- in Super Bazar.

(Interruptions)

अध्यक्ष महोदय : मैंने तो सखवार में पढ़ा था । (व्यवधान)

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO:
Delhi is a large city. The prices ruling in the Delhi market are generally higher than what they are in smaller towns outside in the sugar-producing areas, but even in Delhi, so far as I know the price is not more than Rs. 8/-. For my own house also, sugar was purchased at Rs. 8 yesterday or the day before. (Interruptions)

If prices have not come down, it is due to my friends there. They are creating a psychology of scarcity by saying that sugar production will be less. They are keeping the price high, Government wants to bring it down.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

मध्य प्रदेश में भारतीय खाद्य निगम के कर्मचारियों के विरुद्ध शिकायतें

* 400. श्री काली चरन शर्मा : क्या कृषि मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या मध्य प्रदेश राज्य में भारतीय खाद्य निगम के कर्मचारियों के विरुद्ध लगातार ही ऐसी शिकायतें प्राप्त हो रही हैं कि वे घूस लेते हैं, खाद्यान्नों में मिलावट करते हैं और व्यापारियों को खाद्यान्नों की सप्लाई करते समय खाद्यान्नों को तोलने से भी मना करते हैं; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो इस सम्बन्ध में स्थिति पर नियंत्रण पाने के लिए क्या उपाय किये जा रहे हैं ?