

LOK SABHA DEBATES

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LOK SABHA

Friday, March 20, 1981/Phalgun 29,
1902 (SAKA)

The Lok Sabha met at two minutes
past Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

एक माननीय सदस्य : आज भी
लेट ।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : यादत तो नहीं
पड़ गई है ? यादत पड़ गई मालूम
होती है । चव्हाण साहब, पंजाबी का यह
शेर तो नहीं चुना आपने :—

पैसा यादतां जादियां नहीं बारिस शाह

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: If we
throw colour at you, will it be treated
as a breach of privilege?

MR. SPEAKER: Is it? All right.
Shri Das.

Scheme for benefit of Small and
Marginal Jute Growers of West Bengal

*453. SHRI R. P. DAS: Will the
Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to
state:

(a) the steps taken to implement
the Central Government sponsored
pilot schemes for the benefit of small
and marginal jute growers of West
Bengal; and

(b) the quantum of funds sanctioned
for the purpose by Government?

4400 LS—1.

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE
AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI
PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b).
A pilot scheme for the benefit of small
and marginal jute growers in selected
districts of West Bengal has been framed
by the Jute Corporation of India in
consultation with the Government of
West Bengal. The Board of the JCI
approved the scheme at its meeting
held on 23-2-81 and sanctioned a sum
of Rs. 36,000 to meet various contingent
expenses. This is not a Central Govern-
ment sponsored scheme and, there-
fore, the question of sanction of funds
for the purpose by Government does
not arise.

SHRI R. P. DAS: In view of the fact
that there is no such pilot scheme
sponsored by the Central Government
may I know from the Minister what
are the other schemes which the Gov-
ernment propose to launch with a view
to providing assistance to the small and
marginal jute-growers to make available
remunerative prices and appropriate
price incentives to the farmers
as a whole, as suggested by the Das
Committee, appointed by this Govern-
ment?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: As I
explained on an earlier occasion, we
received the report of the Das Com-
mittee recently and it is under exami-
nation. Regarding the other types of
Schemes that we are going to have,
presently we have no such scheme. In
regard to the arrangement for provid-
ing minimum support price and inter-
vening in the market to see that the
support price is being maintained, we
have taken various steps particularly
in streamlining the uncutting of the
public sector organisation, the JCI.
With regard to the provision of credit,
we have made arrangements with the
banks to provide the necessary institu-
tional credit to these farmers.

SHRI R. P. DAS: Whether the Gov-
ernment would consider and sponsored

scheme to make good the loss suffered by the farmers in general and the small and marginal jute growers in particular due to the fall in prices by a market mechanism in the form of compensation, as has been rightly done in the case of cotton growers of Maharashtra last year?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: That is large question. This has no relevance to the Maharashtra Cotton Corporation's procurement operations. I have already indicated that whatever is produced by the growers will be completely purchased by the JCI. Therefore, the question of incurring losses by the fall in prices or the market mechanism does not arise.

श्री राजेन्द्र प्रनाब यादव : देश भर में पाट-उत्पादकों की हालत बदतर हो रही है। खास तौर पर वेस्ट बंगाल, बिहार और आसाम में, जहाँ पाट ही कृषि क्राप है, उनकी बहुत बड़ी हालत हो रही है—इस माने में कि छोटे उत्पादक पाट लेकर बाजार जाते हैं, और जे सी आई के जो परचेज सेंटर बने हुए हैं, और सपोर्ट प्राइस भी फिक्स कर रखी है, वे उनसे नहीं लेते हैं। उनको परेशान किया जाता है। परिणाम यह होता है कि वे मिडलमैन के पास जाते हैं, जिनसे जे सी आई के लोग खरीदते हैं। मैं अपने क्षेत्रों का दौरा कर के आया हूँ और मैंने देखा है कि मध्यम और बड़े उत्पादकों का पाट भी पड़ा हुआ है और जे सी आई के परचेज सेंटर अभी तक उसको नहीं खरीद रहे हैं। यद्यपि पाट खरीदने का समय बढ़ा दिया गया था, लेकिन आज तक वह नहीं खरीदा गया है। अगर पाट उत्पादकों की इन कठिनाइयों को दूर नहीं किया जायेगा और उन्हें अपनी उपज के बाजिव दाम नहीं मिलेंगे, तो मुमकिन है कि कल को वे पाट पैदा करना ही छोड़ दें। क्या सरकार ऐसी व्यवस्था करेगी कि उन लोगों का पाट बाजिव दाम

पर खरीदा जाये और वे लोग अपने भी पाट का उत्पादन कर सकें ?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: When the question came up for discussion on the floor of the House, I have said many a time that it is true that the JCI operation is not up to the mark so that it can prevent a fall in price in certain areas. The reasons have been explained on a number of occasions. Therefore, the answer to the problem lies in improving the functioning of the JCI. As I have said, I am in touch with the various jute producing State Governments to see in what manner we can improve the operational functioning of the JCI.

SHRI TRIDIB CHAUDHURI: One thing is not clear from the reply given by the Minister. It is stated that the Central Government has not sponsored any scheme. It seems that some scheme has been launched, in consultation with the West Bengal Government and only a sum of Rs. 56,000 has been sanctioned, by whom we do not know Who has sponsored this scheme and what are the features of this scheme?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: The scheme is being sponsored by the JCI, in consultation with the Government of West Bengal. This sum of Rs. 36,000 is for the management cost, you may call it, to operate the scheme. These are not for the growers. So far as the growers are concerned, they will get money. Under this scheme we are going to provide improved varieties of seeds, the necessary technology for rating of jute and for improving the quality of the product. And JCI will purchase the entire production from these growers who are identified. Two panchayats have been identified in each district of the jute growing area, and 9 such districts are there. A monitoring committee has been constituted with the representatives of the State Government under the chairmanship of the District Magistrate of the Deputy Commissioner of that district and various agricultural extension officers, Block Development Officers and

representatives of the leading banks are there. Therefore, through these schemes we are trying to have some experiment to see in what manner we can improve the quality of production, we can ensure the marketability of these products and improve the rating of the jute which they produce.

Cases against Hindustan Lever for marketing soaps below standard weight

*454. SHRI K. A. RAJAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE, RURAL RECONSTRUCTION, IRRIGATION AND CIVIL SUPPLY be pleased to state:

(a) whether several cases are in progress in various States against Hindustan Lever which is a subsidiary of Uni-Lever of U.K. for marketing soaps below the declared weight; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI BRAJA MOHAN MOHANTY): (a) No, Sir, No case has been instituted on behalf of the Government of India against M/s. Hindustan Lever under the relevant provisions of the Standards of Weights & Measure Act, 1976.

(b) The question does not arise.

SHRI K. A. RAJAN: The Government can either very well say that they are not having the information or they can very well cleverly say that they want to collect the information. I say with all the information I have that regarding the under-weight of the soaps, certain enquiries and cases had been instituted in Uttar Pradesh at Aligarh Sikohabad and Kotdwar and in Himachal Pradesh at Hamirpur. Sir, about this short weight, the original weight, the reduced weight and the date of weight reduction I would just, specify for the information of the Minister the dates on which the particular products reduced in weight.

For Lifebuoy, the original weight is 170 grams, reduced weight is 165 grams and the date of weight reduction was 5-8-1968.

About Sunlight, the original weight is 165 grams, the reduced weight is 150 grams and the date of weight reduction was 6-8-1970.

Again, about Lifebuoy, the original weight is 165 grams, reduced weight is 150 grams and the date of weight reduction was 6-8-1970.

About Vim, the original weight is 610 grams, reduced weight is 600 grams and the date of weight reduction was 1-1-1969.

MR. SPEAKER: Please ask the question now.

SHRI K. A. RAJAN: These are the specific dates on which the soaps were marketed with reduced weight and naturally, you know the prices have not been reduced. So, while these specific cases of reduction in weight are there, it is a clear case of cheating and a fraud on the Government. I would like to know whether the multinationals are managing the Government or the Government is managing the multinationals. I would also like to know from the Minister, on these specific charges whether they are going to constitute an inquiry into the matter.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, RURAL RECONSTRUCTION, IRRIGATION AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (RAO BIRENDRA SINGH): I would like the hon. Member to understand the working of this Act. The implementation of the Act is through the States. But in the case of manufacturers who have a large network for retail sales all over the country in different States, it would not be proper to allow the States to launch prosecutions because of the danger that there might be different pronouncements by different courts in different places with regard to the same charges against the same manufacturer. Therefore, the authority has been retained under the Act by the Centre in case of manufacturers whose products are sold in interstate trade all over the country and this is one of the companies. There is no provision by which we can determine whether the shrinkage is there after the manu-