

MR. SPEAKER: Even an evasive reply is a reply.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Just now, he said that the Janata Party only talked. They do not even talk; no question of implementation.

SHRI BHISHMA NARAIN SINGH: I will talk what is relevant.

Food for Work Programme in Dhanbad District, Bihar

*209. **SHRI A.K. ROY:** Will the Minister of RURAL RECONSTRUCTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Food for Work Programme has been stopped all over the country in general and in Dhanbad district of Bihar in particular since last year;

(b) details of the foodgrain supplied for that to Bihar in general and Dhanbad district of Bihar in particular in the year 1981;

(c) whether in view of severe drought the Food for Work Programme would again be started this year;

(d) if so, when; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (SHRI BALESHWAR RAM): (a) to (e). The Food for Work Programme has been replaced by National Rural Employment Programme since October, 1980. Presently, it is this programme which is in actual operation all over the country including Dhanbad district of Bihar.

Cash funds amounting to Rs. 1210 lakhs have been given to Bihar as Central share for implementation of the programme for the first two quarters of the current year. An equal amount is likely to be given to the State for the remaining two quarters. 20,000 MTs of foodgrains were also released to them. Out of these, the allocations made to Dhanbad district are as under:

<i>Cash Funds</i>	<i>Foodgrains</i>
Rs. 65.88 lakhs	300 MTs.

SHRI A. K. ROY: The Minister gave me the answer not in parts but in lump just as the foodgrains are supplied. I detected that the present Government was going to stop Food for Work Programme in Bihar last year and a question was asked on the basis of the news items which appeared in "The Statesman" on 28th June. You intervened in the House and asked "Why do you quote this newspaper which is not authentic?" and the Minister denied the statement which appeared in the newspaper. But later on to my question on 28-7-80, which was answered in December, it was stated that no foodgrains were supplied to Bihar from May to October. That means the entire Food for Work Programme was stopped. Now it is said that the Food for Work Programme has been re-named as National Rural Employment Programme and only 300 metric tonnes of foodgrains was allotted to Dhanbad for three months which means that only some 100 people would get work when in fact there are at least 1,000 people who need work. I have to bring to your notice that this year entire South Bihar is in the grip of extreme drought and North Bihar is in extreme floods. In view of this position, the Chief Minister also complained that the supply of foodgrains should be increased. Therefore, may I know from the Minister whether this small allotment would be increased for

Bihar which is now affected by the floods in the North and drought in the South ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRIES OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (SHRI BALESHWAR RAM): The Hon. Member is confusing the issue.

Under the Public Distribution System, foodgrains are supplied by the different Food Departments.

Under the Food for Work Programme, which has been recast as NREP, the supply of foodgrains is made on 50:50 basis. So, according to my information, this year also under the Food for Work Programme, we have released 20,000 metric tonnes to Bihar and 300 metric tonnes for Dhanbad District. Under the Food for Work Programme, 1 KG of foodgrains is given to a labourer. This is the position.

I am not talking about the public distribution system. That is a separate question altogether.

So far as the Food for Work Programme is concerned, this is a national welfare programme. The State Government is given foodgrains and money also.

SHRI A. K. ROY : Under the Food for Work Programme, poor people used to get 3 KGs of wheat and Re. 1/-.

Under the National Rural Employment Programme, they are getting only 1 KG of wheat and Rs. 3/-. It means less than Rs. 5/- It is much less than even the minimum wages guaranteed by the State Government for agricultural labourers.

These two Schemes, two Programmes, are not the same.

The change of the Food for Work Programme to National Rural Employment Programme is not in the interest of the poor. It is to their disadvantage.

Therefore, I would like to know what are the causes which made you change the Food for Work Programme to National Rural Employment Programme and whether you can upgrade the allotment or upgrade the remuneration under the National Rural Employment Programme at least to the scale of Food for Work Programme, or the minimum wages that an agricultural labourer gets in the village.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION AND IRRIGATION AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (RAO BIRENDRA SINGH): The Food for Work Programme was renamed National Rural Employment Programme last year, mainly because we like the other name better than Food For-Work-Programme. This Programme has been made a part of our Sixth Five-Year Plan. As my colleague has already stated, this Programme does not take into account the minimum wages prevalent in that place. This is only some help from the Centre to generate employment in rural areas. For drought-affected areas, there was a special Food-For-Work Programme in the year 1979-80, but that was under special drought conditions that existed then; it was dropped later. Now it is a normal programme for all the States on the same basis. As has already been stated by Mr. Baleshwar Ram, this one kg of food is part of the component of what is paid to the worker; the rest comes in the shape of cash which is also shared by the Central Government and the State Government. It is upto the State authorities to provide

work and to distribute this according to the needs of an area village-wise or Block-wise in the various districts wherever durable community assets can be created and where people are more in need of work. Therefore, Government cannot accept the position that the National Rural Employment Programme should be based on minimum wages. It is just a form of assistance that we provide for the people and it is upto the community to take interest in creating assets for themselves. Therefore, the rest of the money can be found by the State Government or other local authorities.

SHRI A.K. ROY : When they are substituting the Food-For-Work Programme by something, at least the benefit should be on par with that in the Food-For-Work Programme.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : Earlier we felt that there was no uniformity in the country from State to State in the matter of distribution of foodgrains : some States were issuing five kg, some others at the rate of four kg and some others only three kg. We then decided that the maximum help that should be provided should be equivalent to three kg of foodgrains : out of that, one kg will be foodgrains and equivalent of two kg foodgrains will come in the form of cash and that too will be in two components, one for purchase of material and the other for wages. That programme is continuing. I do not know what the Hon. Member...

SHRI A.K. ROY ; There should be advantages for the poor.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : Advantages for the poor are there. We are now employing about one million people daily all over the country. Employment for one mil-

lion people every day throughout the year is not a small programme. It has definitely some advantages.

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV : There is a severe drought in Rajasthan for the last four successive years and the Hon. Minister has seen the site. It is very unfortunate that, in western Rajasthan, still the famine works have not been started, and the Hon. Minister has not provided the quantity of food required by the Government of Rajasthan. Will the Hon. Minister now assure that the requisite quantity of food will be given for the NRE Programme in Rajasthan ?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : Foodgrains for Rajasthan also will be given according to the norms and formula that we have laid down. Rajasthan will not be left behind.

श्री शिवप्रसाद साहू : अध्यक्ष महोदय, अभी मंत्री जी ने कहा है कि "काम के बदले अनाज" योजना के बदले "राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण रोजगार योजना चालू की गई है जिसके अन्तर्गत केन्द्रीय सरकार के द्वारा काफी अनाज विभिन्न राज्यों को मोहिया किया गया है। यह प्रश्न बिहार के सम्बन्ध में पूछा गया है, मैं इस प्रश्न के भाग (ग) के सम्बन्ध में कहूंगा कि विशेषकर बिहार का जो छोटा नागपुर का इलाका है उसमें रांची और पलामू जिले की जो स्थिति है वह भयंकर है और गया की जो स्थिति है आज लाखों आदमी वहां से भागे हुए हैं। मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूं कि भूख के चलते जो गरीब आदमी वहां से भाग रहे हैं क्या केन्द्रीय सरकार अपने माध्यम से बिहार सरकार को जोर दे कर कहेगी कि राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण रोजगार योजना के तहत जो भगदड़ मची हुई है उस पर अंकुश लगाये और वहां पर लोगों को रोजगार मुहिया करे ?

श्री बालेश्वर राम : बिहार सरकार के पास फूड-ग्रेन्ज भ्रवेलेबिल है। प्राप भी बिहार सरकार को कहें कि जिन जिलों में ज्यादा जरूरत है वहां काम शुरू करें और जो उनके पास है पहले उसको खत्म कर लें, जो पैसा उनको दिया गया है उस को खर्च कर लें, उसके बाद प्रागे फिर 50-50 बेसिज पर मांगेंगे तो देने को तैयार हैं।

Suger Policy

*210. SHRI CHITTA BASU :
SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have finally formulated the sugar policy for the current year; and

(b) if so, details of the policy ?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION AND IRRIGATION AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (RAO BIRENDRA SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The main features of the sugar policy formulated for the sugar year 1981-82 are :

- (i) continuance of partial control on sugar and the dual pricing mechanism, with the ratio of levy to free-sale sugar remaining at 65 : 35;
- (ii) fixation of ex-factory prices of levy sugar for the 1981-82 season for 16 geographical zones as in 1980-81, on the basis of the statutory minimum price of sugarcane and using the cost schedules and other parameters recommended by the High Level Committee in October, 1980;

(iii) continuance of the benefit of a higher ex-factory levy price for weaker units;

(iv) collection of a Development Cess at the rate of Rs. 5 per quintal of sugar from the industry to create a Development Fund mainly for giving assistance for rehabilitation and modernisation of sick units;

(v) Increase in the retail consumer price of levy sugar from Rs. 3.50 to Rs. 3.65 per kg. w. e. f. 15th November, 1981;

(vi) decision, in principle, to create a buffer stock of sugar ; and

(vii) grant of a rebate in Excise Duty for early crushing of cane by sugar mills.

SHRI CHITTA BASU : I think you will agree that the price policy regarding sugar cane is an integral part or should be an integral part of the sugar policy of the Government. Unfortunately, you will find in the reply that nothing has been mentioned about the price policy of cane in the formulation of the sugar policy of the Government.

My question is : in view of the fact that the price fixed by the APC and by several State Governments in regard to sugar cane are not adequate to meet the cost of production of sugar cane, would the Hon. Minister assure the House that he would revise the price of sugar cane in order to ensure a remunerative price for the cane-growers for which they have been agitating for a long period of time in different parts of the sugar-cane growing States ?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : We are advising the States already as was done last year by the Prime Minister that the State Governments should ensure that remunerative