

Statement

(a) The Government of India remains in constant touch with the State Governments to ensure successful implementation of national programmes and policies including those having a bearing on prices.

(b) and (c). The thrust of Government price stabilisation policy has been to tackle the problem by substantially improving availability and supplies, strengthening the public distribution system, enforcing regulatory measures and reducing excess liquidity in the system. The State have been advised from time to time to implement the anti-inflationary measures, in particular ensuring the efficient functioning of the public distribution system in respect of essential commodities, such as cereals, sugar, edible oil, kerosene etc. and taking action against hoarders and black marketeers. As a result of the continued effort both at the Centre and in the States, it has been possible to reduce the annual rate of inflation significantly.

MR. SPEAKER: I think we have had a lot of discussion on this yesterday.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY: I want to put a supplementary on this.

MR. SPEAKER: I cannot have supplementaries when we had a discussion yesterday on it for four hours.

Export of Vegetable

*292. SHRI XAVIER ARAKAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to lay a statement showing:

(a) what is the policy of Government in exporting agricultural produce;

(b) what is the total quantity of vegetables exported in the years 1979-80, 1980-81 and 1981-82; and

(c) which are the agencies, exporting vegetables from India?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Export of agricultural produce is allowed keeping in view the production, domestic demand and internal prices.

(b) Export figures in respect of vegetables other than onions and potatoes are given below:

1979-80	4678 tonnes	}	*
1980-81	7210 tonnes		
1-4-81 to 30-6-81	2290 tonnes		

*Provisional

(c) Export of vegetables is now allowed under OGL—3.

SHRI XAVIER ARAKAL: The export policy of agricultural produce is governed by three factors: production, domestic demand and internal prices. If you refer to part (b) of the statement you will find that between 1.4.81 to 30.6.81 2290 tonnes of vegetables were exported. Now in the market vegetables are dear and scarce. Probably you are fully aware of the problem. In view of scarcity of vegetables and their high prices, will the Government review the export policy of vegetables?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: The hon. member is aware that sometimes we take a decision of exporting vegetables and such products just to see that the prices are checked. The hon. member is aware that the total production is roughly about 10 million tonnes and the export in any particular year where we had the maximum was 7210 in 1980-81 out

of the total production of 10 million tonnes. The hon. member is also aware what happened about two years back, because when we did not permit the export of onions, the prices crashed and the growers did not get anything; and a lot of agitation took place; and sometimes it happens that the transportation cost from one part of India to the other part of India is more than exporting to the neighbouring countries. So, we have to take a realistic view in regard to this matter.

SHRI XAVIER ARAKAL: I am not saying that we should not have a realistic view. Part (c) of my question says, "Which are the agencies, exporting vegetables from India? The answer is: "Export of vegetables is now allowed under OGL-3." You may refer to that question. I stop there. But my question relates to another point. A few merchants in each city are controlling the entire business of vegetables; they are also exporting to other countries as well. Therefore, a group of merchants is controlling the entire market. In view of this fact of monopolistic marketing of vegetables in our country and in exporting them abroad, will the Government take an initiative to have more cooperative societies or vegetables marketing boards instead of those private agencies?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: As and when cooperatives come, we give them preference. Cooperatives can also take an advantage of exporting under OGL-3; they are not barred.

SHRI B. V. DESAI: This is a fact that vegetables are very much in need in our country. Secondly, if we want to export them, dehydration is essential because it is a commodity which is susceptible to perishing. Therefore, may I know from the hon. Minister whether the Government is thinking of having dehydration plants at proper places so that the vegetables which are being sent out

are properly sent out and fetch proper prices?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: In respect of certain commodities, this suggestion is welcome and actually we are doing it. Take the case of ginger. In many of the north eastern districts and other hilly areas, the growers do not get any price because there is no market outside. So, there are certain commodities from which we are exploring that possibility and to see that we export them.

श्री मलिक एम० एम० ए० खां :
 मैं यह जानना चाहूंगा कि हालेण्ड सीलोन को 14 सौ रुपये क्विन्टल पर पोटेटु एक्सपोर्ट कर रहा है, वह वाटिकेट हमें 7 सौ रुपये क्विन्टल पर मिल सकता है, जबकि हमारे यहाँ आलू सरप्लस है, क्या हम सीलोन को पोटेटु एक्सपोर्ट कर के फारन एक्सचेंज नहीं कमा सकते हैं ?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: We are exporting potatoes and onions also. If the hon. member is interested in getting figures I can give him. In 1979-80, we exported potatoes worth Rs. 2 crores; in 1980-81, the provisional figure was 18 lakhs. And destination wise, I cannot say. Sometimes we send it to neighbouring countries.

श्री मलिक एम० एम० ए० खां :
 इतना करोब का मुल्क होते हुए वह यूरोपियन कंट्रीज से आलू ले रहा है। आप उसकी जरूरतों को क्यों पूरा नहीं कर सकते हैं ?

MR. SPEAKER: Question hour is over.

श्री मलिक एम० एम० ए० खां :
 मेरे सवाल का जवाब नहीं आया है।