

instead of ONGC and Oil India is still to get the oil by production-oriented exploratory drilling.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR: Different agencies have been trying to carry out the surveys both on-shore and off-shore. NSRA has also been carrying out the survey. It is not as though the surveys have not been carried out by them. It is true that different reports have been coming about the potentiality of oil deposits in West Bengal. What I would like to submit is that once the surveys have been completed the data processing will have to be carried out. This an intricate job.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI: Already exploration has been made by the USSR ship and after that they have gone in for production oriented exploratory drilling. I would like to know whether NSRA has been entrusted with the job to delineate the hydro-carbon areas both on-shore and off-shore?

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR: I was submitting the details about what is being carried out. It is on the basis of seismic surveys which have been carried out that certain drilling operations have been carried out from time to time. So far as Mhanadi Basin is concerned Oil India Ltd. has been entrusted with the job of survey as also the drilling. So far as the rest of the area of West Bengal is concerned most of the portion has been entrusted to ONGC for the purpose of drilling activity because ONGC has got not only the equipment but also the expertise and better technical know-how. As regards on-shore contract as on today it is only with the Soviet Union. We have not entered into contract with any other country. Regarding the off-shore drillings, it is the ONGC and the Oil India who had been carrying out the drillings.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: May I know whether the hon. Minister is aware of the fact that in respect of all the seven oil wells which have already been

drilled in West Bengal, drillings were conducted upto not more than 5,000 metres whereas it is generally believed by knowledgeable parties that the oil layer in West Bengal is likely to be somewhat deeper than 5,000 metres. So, having regard to this fact, would the hon. Minister kindly ask the ONGC to take up deeper drillings in the basin of West Bengal so that oil exploration is done more speedily?

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR: That is only a suggestion which my friend has conveyed for consideration.

PROF. RUP CHAND PAL: May I know from the hon. Minister whether it is not a fact that as long back as 1951-52, the Standard Vacuum Oil Company had made a comprehensive survey of West Bengal in search of oil and also drilled a number of places with favourable results, but the Report of Stanvac which had said that there were large deposits of oil in wide areas of West Bengal, had been mysteriously missing and we do not know about the fate of that Report? May I know from the Minister whether he has any knowledge of that Report or not?

AN HON. MEMBER: He says 'Mysteriously missing.'

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR: So far as Indo-Stanvac Petroleum project is concerned, this company carried out surveys and certain drillings in the area between 1951 to 1959. But the result of the exploratory drilling venture was not very encouraging and this Company therefore discontinued further operations, in the area.

सोडा एश का उत्पादन और आयात

* 67. श्री कृष्ण चन्द्र पाण्डे :

श्री सज्जन कुमार :

क्या पेट्रोलियम, रसायन और उर्वरक मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि देश में सोडा एश का इतना अधिक उत्पादन होता है कि उसे बहुत कम मूल्यों पर बेचा जा रहा है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो इसके बावजूद इसका आयात जारी रखे जान के क्या कारण हैं ;

(ग) देश में सोडा ऐश को मांग को तुलना में गत एक वर्ष के दौरान उसका कितना उत्पादन हुआ और कितनी मात्रा में सोडा ऐश के आयात किया गया और इसके क्या कारण हैं ; और

(घ) सोडा ऐश का आयात रोकने हेतु सरकार द्वारा क्या कदम उठाए जा रहे हैं ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR): (a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) The demand for soda ash, as estimated by the Working Group on Inorganic Chemicals comprising the representative of the Directorate General of Technical Development, Development Commissioner for Small Scale Industries, the Planning Commission and the Deptt. of Chemicals and Fertilizers, was 6.80 lakh tonnes for the year 1981-82. The production of soda ash in 1981-82 was 6.32 lakh tonnes. The ex-works prices of soda ash produced indigenously are now in the range of Rs. 1759.40 to Rs. 2395.57 per tonne.

(b) Import of soda ash is permitted under Open General Licence (OGL). Import of soda ash is also permitted against REP licences. Any actual user or export house can import soda ash if he wishes to do so.

(c) The production of soda ash in the calendar year 1981 was 6.40 lakh tonnes and the production in the financial year 1981-82 was 6.32 lakh tonnes. The estimated demand of soda ash for 1981-82 was 6.80 lakh tonnes. Imports of soda ash were 0.84 lakh tonnes during 1980-81 (upto December, 1980). Import statistics for the period subsequent to December, 1980 are yet to be published. Once the data are compiled,

they would be published in the Monthly Statistics of Foreign Trade of India (Volume-II). Copies of which would be available in the Parliamentary Library.

(d) The manufacturers have been representing that because of large scale imports and poor off-take, stocks are accumulating and that, unless imports are banned, the industry would be badly affected. However, consumers' associations like the All India Glass Manufacturers' Federation and the All India Silicate Manufacturers' Association are pleading for the continuance of the present import policy. The import policy is constantly under review. Imports are regulated taking into account demand and indigenous availability.

श्री कृष्ण चन्द्र पाण्डे: माथनीय अध्यक्ष जी, मंत्री जी ने काफी विस्तृत जवाब दे दिया है। मान्यवर, मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूँ कि विदेश में जो सोडा ऐश आयात किया जा रहा है, 1980-81 में और 1981-82 में यह किस मूल्य दर पर आयात किया जा रहा है ?

श्री पी. शिव शंकर: लगभग 80 डालर प्रति टन के हिसाब से।

श्री कृष्ण चन्द्र पाण्डे: जो सोडा ऐश आयात किया गया है, उसकी दर में और बाजार मूल्य में क्या फर्क है ? क्या यह बताने का कष्ट करेंगे ? सोडा ऐश का जो उत्पादन अपने देश में हो रहा है वह कौन-कौन सी कम्पनियों द्वारा किया जा रहा है और ये कम्पनियाँ जब चाहती हैं बाजार में इतना सोडा भेज देती हैं कि सोडा का मूल्य गिर जाता है और जब चाहती हैं सोडा ऐश का उत्पादन कम कर देती हैं, उससे मूल्य बढ़ जाता है।

श्री पी. शिव शंकर: जहाँ तक मूल्य का सवाल है, सोडा ऐश का मूल्य 2100 से 2400 रुपए प्रति टन है। चार कम्पनियाँ बनाती हैं : - मेसर्स टाटा केमिकल्स, मेसर्स सौराष्ट्र केमिकल्स, मेसर्स धरं-यधेरा, हरि फटीलाइजर्स और पांचवीं कम्पनी तृतीकारिन अलकेलाइज है जो इस-

का उत्पादन करने जा रही हैं। ऐसी बात दिखाई नहीं देती कि तब वे प्रोडक्शन ज्यादा करती हैं, जब कीमतें ज्यादा होती हैं और जब कीमतें घट जाती हैं तो प्रोडक्शन कम करती हैं। यह बात जरूर है कि वे कुछ सोडा एश उन्हीं प्रोड्यूस किया उस में से काफी कुछ सोडा एश इस किस्म का है जिस की बिक्री नहीं होने की वजह से वह पड़ा रह गया है। एक वजह यह भी हो सकती है कि जो आयात किया जा रहा है सोडा एश वह कम कीमत पर होने की वजह से इन कंपनियों के पास जो सोडा एश है उसको बिक्री के लिए लोग उठा नहीं रहे हैं।

श्री सज्जन कुमार: जब सोडा एश का स्टाक काफी मात्रा में मौजूद है, और यदि इसी तरह से वह षार्किट में बिक्री नहीं सका तो उसका उत्पादन गिर नहीं जाएगा और उत्पादन गिरने के कारण क्या हजारों मजदूर बेकार नहीं हो जाएंगे ?

जो सोडा एश आयात किया गया है उस पर कितनी विदेशी मुद्रा खर्च की गई है और जब सोडा एश हमारे पास है तो क्या उसके आयात पर प्रतिबन्ध लगाया जा रहा है ?

श्री पी. शिव शंकर: मजदूरों की बेकारी का कोई सवाल ही, ऐसी बात नहीं है। इसका कारण यह है कि आज भी पोजिशन यह है कि जहां तक हमारी डिमांड का सवाल है, डिमांड और प्रोडक्शन में काफी अन्तर है। हमारी प्रोडक्शन देश के अन्दर जो डिमांड है उसकी मीट नहीं कर पा रही है। इस दृष्टि से मैं पही समझता हूँ कि प्रोडक्शन गिर जाएगा और मजदूरों के लिए कोई मुसीबत खड़ी हो जाएगी।

जहां तक विदेशी मुद्रा खर्च करने की बात है सोडा एश का आयात ओपन जनरल लाइसेंस में है, उसको कनेलाइज नहीं किया गया है। इसलिए यह कहना मुश्किल है कि कितनी इस में फारने एक्सचेंज इन्वाल्ड है। लेकिन आम तौर से ऐसा होता आया है कि कुछ हजार टन सोडा एश का ही आयात बाहर से होता आ रहा है।

SHRI VASANT KUMAR PANDIT: Will the hon. Minister state how much

soda ash was imported under OGL and under REP licences in two years? Before any additional licences are given, it has been the policy of the Government to encourage the indigenous manufactures. Therefore, my supplementary is whether these 4 companies who are manufacturing soda ash are producing this item to their full capacity or are they in partial production. Further production can be made by these 4 companies if proper support is given to the indigenous manufacturers. There is no reason given here why the consumer associations are pleading with the Government for the continuance of the policy of OGL. On what ground are they pleading with the Government? Are you convinced by their arguments? What is your Policy?

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR: What policy? Do you mean to say policy of import?

SHRI VASANT KUMAR PANDIT: Yes, Policy of import. What are the reasons the consumers have given?

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR: So far as the question of import is concerned, in 1978-79, 0.234 lakh tonnes of soda ash was imported, in 1979-80, it is 1.35 lakh tonnes and in 1980-81 up to December 1980, it was 0.84 lakh tonne.

SHRI VASANT KUMAR PANDIT: I want to know the split up of import between OGL and REP.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR: There is no question of any canalised import of this item at all. As I said earlier, the import is under OGL. So far as the companies are concerned, I agree that the companies are trying their best. It is not as though that they are not trying that. Sometimes, it is not possible for them to produce to their full capacity. So far as the people craving for the import is concerned, I say that the import is mainly from Bulgaria. Even when we had fixed the prices some years back what had happened was this. For example, some time in 1978, the price of soda ash was ruling at above

the rate of Rs. 3500 per tonne and now it is reigning between Rs. 2400 and 2100. But what had been happening is when the prices are coming down the Bulgarians who are exporting the soda ash are also dumping it by reducing the prices.

श्री मलिक एम. एम. ए. सां: मंत्री जी ने दो सवालों के जवाब में अलग बातें कही हैं। एक सवाल के जवाब में उन्होंने कहा कि इसलिए इम्पोर्ट किया जा रहा है सोडा एश क्योंकि डिमांड और प्रोडक्शन में बड़ा भारी फर्क है, डिमांड ज्यादा है और प्रोडक्शन कम है इसलिए इम्पोर्ट किया है। और दूसरे सवाल के जवाब में यह कहा कि इम्पोर्ट करने की वजह से सोडा एश का स्टॉक इंडिजिनसली बढ़ गया है। तो दोनों अलग अलग बातें हैं। तो अगर हमारे यहां जितनी डिमांड है उतनी इंडिजिनस प्रोडक्शन और कैंपेसिटी है तो उनके प्रोडक्शन पर और प्राइस पर कंट्रोल करने के बजाय आप फौरन एक्सचेंज इन्वेंटरी कर रहे हैं इम्पोर्ट करने में, क्या यह आपकी पालिसी सही है ?

Damage Caused by Fire in Sindri Fertilizer Plant

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*68. SHRI B. D. SINGH:

SHRIMATI SUSEELA GOPALAN:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that plants and equipment worth several crores of rupees were damaged in a fire that broke out recently in the Sindri Fertilizer plant;

(b) if so, details thereof, stating the extent of loss suffered as a result thereof; and

(c) the result of the inquiry conducted by Government and the action taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHR P. SHIV SHANKAR): (a) and

(b) The fire broke out from gas cutting work in the old and redundant plant of Sindri Unit which was being dismantled, and it was purely accidental. The preliminary assessment of the loss was Rs. 25.00 lakhs. The Insurance Company accepted Rs. 18.2 lakhs after a detailed assessment of the loss.

(c) An Enquiry Committee was constituted by Fertilizer Corporation of India (FCI) in order to determine the causes of fire etc. The Committee has since submitted its report. The fire broke out from gas cutting work in the old and redundant plant of Sindri unit which was being dismantled and it was purely accidental. The recommendations of the Committee regarding preventive action and augmentation of fire fighting services and equipments are being processed for implementation.

श्री बी. डी. सिंह: अध्यक्ष महोदय, सिन्दरी फर्टिलाइजर प्लांट के पुराने और अनावश्यक संयंत्र की जो कटिंग गैस से हो रही थी, इस उत्तर से ऐसा लगता है कि जो आवश्यक सुरक्षात्मक सतर्कता यहां दरती जानी चाहिये थी, वह नहीं की गई। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहूंगा कि क्योंकि इस रिपोर्ट में सुरक्षात्मक कार्यवाही और अग्निशमन सेवाओं और उपकरणों में वृद्धि की निष्कारिण की गई है, तो जो आवश्यक सतर्कता नहीं दरती गई उसके लिये क्या जांच समिति ने वहां के कुछ अधिकारियों को जिम्मेदार ठहराया है ? यदि हां, तो उनके खिलाफ क्या कार्यवाही की गई ?

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR: Sir, so far as the Report of the Committee is concerned, it has dealt with different aspects. It has not clearly made out as to who are exactly responsible for the damage. But they have felt that it is a case of an accident. They have also suggested what steps have to be taken for preventing it in future. This part of it is being taken care of by the Ministry and the Fertilizer Corporation of India.