

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 82. Shri Daga. Not here.

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV: Since I also come from Rajasthan, may I be permitted to put this question?

MR. SPEAKER: No. Have you got the written authority from the hon. Member?

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV: No.

MR. SPEAKER: Then, you cannot do that. Next question, Q. No. 83.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Question Numbers 83 and 89 may be taken up together as it is exactly the same.

MR. SPEAKER: All right. Mr. Fernandes.

Distribution of Essential Commodities through Public Distribution System

*83. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government intend to pursue the policy to distribute essential commodities to the people through the public distribution system.

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c), Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The distribution of certain selected items of essential commodities through the public distribution system has become an important function of Administration today. The policy of the Government is to strengthen the public distribution system by enlarging the area and population coverage, streamline the arrangements for pro-

urement, bufferstocking and supplies of these essential commodities and to improve the monitoring of information and supervision of the system. Accordingly the States have been advised to ensure that every village or group of villages having a population of 2,000 and above is covered by a fair price shop. The headquarters of a village Panchayat, irrespective of the population, is to be covered by an independent fair price shop. In the remote and inaccessible areas, particularly the tribal belts, the population to be covered by a fair price shop of a village or a cluster of villages, could be 1,000. While the Food Corporation of India, the Public Sector Oil Corporations, Coal India Ltd., have been continuing their operations in procurement and distribution of cereals, kerosene, and soft-coke respectively, the State Trading Corporation was brought in a big way for distribution of imported edible oils through the fair price shops. The National Cooperative Consumers' Federation was entrusted the task of procurement and distribution of tea along with the controlled cloth which it had already been distributing. Arrangements were made with the Indian Soaps & Toiletry Makers' Association for supply of toilet soap through the public distribution system by various soap manufacturing concerns. The Khadi & Village Industries Commission has already started distribution of match-boxes under the system to some States. The arrangements made for procurement and distribution of various selected items of essential commodities are being constantly reviewed by the Department of Civil Supplies in consultation with the State Governments and the various Central agencies. The National Advisory Council set up at the National level has also met last November and reviewed the arrangements for distribution of various essential commodities. The State Governments have also been advised to keep the public distribution system under constant review by setting up State level Coordination Committees.

(c) Does not arise.