

confusion on that point. But we have retained the age as laid down in the Indian Penal Code. In the Penal Code, it is 16 for boys and 18 for girls.

Mr. Chairman: The hon Minister might continue tomorrow.

16:59½ hrs

*SCARCITY OF SUGAR

Mr. Chairman: We shall now take up the half-an-hour discussion on the scarcity of sugar. I should just like to mention one thing. There are as many as seven hon Members who have tabled this motion. Of course, there are a number of supporters. I have got only half an hour. Under the rules, the member who has given notice may make a short statement and any member who has previously intimated to the Speaker may be permitted to ask a question. That is all.

17 hrs

Shri Khuswaqt Rai (Kheri). May I make a submission? This discussion is based on a question about scarcity of sugar. The other day another question was asked about the prices of sugarcane. I have already tabled a motion for discussing the prices of sugarcane. I would like that that discussion should be allowed as a two-hour discussion. I would make that request to Speaker through you. (Interruptions)

Mr Chairman: Today I am concerned only with the half-hour discussion. Shri Braj Raj Singh

श्री ब्रजराज सिंह (फिरोजाबाद) :
सभापति महोदय, यह चर्चा उस प्रश्न पर उठनी है जो मैंने सभ्य मंत्री महोदय से उस दिन पूछा था कि क्या मंत्री महोदय को यह पता है कि उत्तर प्रदेश के गन्ना उत्पादकों ने यह तह किया हुआ है कि यदि उनके गन्ने के दाम २ रुपये प्रति मन नहीं किये गये तो

वे १५ दिसम्बर से गन्ना हड़ताल पर चले जायेंगे। इस पर मंत्री महोदय ने प्रश्न को टालने की कोशिश की और उन्होंने कहा कि इससे गेहूँ का उत्पादन कम हो सकता है। एक माननीय सदस्य ने पहले भी शायद यह इशारा किया कि जो गन्ने की कीमत बढ़ाई जा रही है वह गेहूँ के खर्च पर बढ़ाई जा रही है। गेहूँ का उत्पादन उससे कम होगा लेकिन मैं भिन्न करना चाहता हूँ कि एक इस तरह का गलत प्रचार किया जा रहा है मुल्क में कि गन्ने और गेहूँ का कोई ऐसा सम्बन्ध है जिसमें गन्ने की कीमत बढ़ाने से गेहूँ का उत्पादन कम हो सकता है। मेरा निवेदन है कि लाघ मंत्री महोदय यह देखें कि गन्ना सिर्फ उन क्षेत्रों में पैदा हो सकता है जिनमें कि फेक्टरीज मौजूद हैं और फेक्टरीज आप खुद कंट्रोल किये हैं उन क्षेत्रों में जहाँ पर कि पहले से गन्ना हो रहा है और उन दूसरे क्षेत्रों में जहाँ पर कि गन्ने की फेक्टरीज नहीं है वहाँ पर गन्ने का उत्पादन नहीं होता और वहाँ पर गन्ने की कीमत बढ़ाने का सवाल नहीं है। अगर दूसरे क्षेत्रों में गन्ने का उत्पादन करे तो उससे सिर्फ गुड और खडसारी ही बन सकती है और खडसारी पर भी आप कंट्रोल कर रहे हैं। इस तरह गन्ने की कीमत बढ़ाने से गेहूँ का उत्पादन कम हो सकता है, गलत है। गन्ने का उत्पादन आसानी से नहीं हुआ करता। उसके लिये सिंचाई की आवश्यकता होती है, उसके लिए और सब चीजों की आवश्यकता होती है। आप जानते हैं कि आपने इन १२ सालों के अन्दर कितनी सिंचाई की सिंचाई किसानों को दी हुई है? इतनी सिंचाई नहीं दी है जिससे कोई ज्यादा गन्ने का उत्पादन बढ़ सके, किसी चीज का उत्पादन बढ़ सके। गन्ने का उत्पादन ऐसी चीज नहीं है जो आसानी से बढ़ सके इसलिए यह एम्पेशन देना कि गन्ने की कीमत बढ़ने से कहीं पर गेहूँ का उत्पादन कम हो जायगा, कतई गलत बात है।

[श्री बजराम सिंह]

कहा जाता है कि सरकार ने एक सप्ली-मेंटरी में बताया कि उन्होंने चीनी का उत्पादन बढ़ाने के लिये कुछ प्रलोभन दिये हैं, कीमत बढ़ाई है। लेकिन जहाँ तक कीमत बढ़ाने का सवाल आता है तो गन्ने की कीमत ३ आने प्रति मन बढ़ाने के लिए उन्होंने ३ आने प्रति मन के हिसाब से रिफवरी कर लगाते हुए १०० मन गन्ने पर उन्होंने १० मन चीनी बनाई और १४ आने मन चीनी की कीमत भी बढ़ा दी। आप देखेंगे कि प्रश्न यह था कि यह देखा जाता कि बाकई क्या चीनी की कीमत जो इस वक्त दी जा रही है फँटरी मोनर्स को कारखानों के मालिकान की वह चीनी की कीमत काफी है या नहीं। मैं खुद नहीं बल्कि स्वयं मंत्री महीन्द्रय बतलाये कि उत्तर प्रदेश के मुख्य मंत्री ने—यह जानने की बात है कि उत्तर प्रदेश हिन्दुस्तान में ५० फीसदी से ज्यादा चीनी पैदा करता है—उत्तर प्रदेश के मुख्य मंत्री ने दिसम्बर सन १९५८ में उत्तर प्रदेश की विधान सभा में यह कहा कि पश्चिमी उत्तर प्रदेश में चीनी की जो कौस्ट प्राइस आती है, खर्चा आता है वह ३३ रुपये २५ नये पैसे है जब कि पूर्वी उत्तर प्रदेश में चीनी की कौस्ट प्राइस ३३ रुपये ३४ नये पैसे आती है, यह है उत्तर प्रदेश के मुख्य मंत्री का कहना। हमारे अपने आकड़े भी यही साबित करेंगे लेकिन इतना वक्त नहीं है कि मैं अपने आकड़ों से यह सिद्ध कर सकूँ। लेकिन मैं यह बतला देना चाहता हूँ कि हम यह साबित कर सकते हैं अगर कोई ट्रिब्युनल हो, कोई कमेटी मुकर्रर हो। चीनी की कौस्ट प्राइस इस वक्त जो कि अभी आपने बढ़ाई है ३ आने प्रति मन गन्ने की कीमत, उससे पहले चीनी की कौस्ट प्राइस मूल में ३१ रुपये ९५ नये पैसे से ज्यादा नहीं पड़ सकती। आपके सारे टंक शामिल करते हुए आपके खर्चा शामिल करते हुए यानी ३२ रुपये ज्यादा से ज्यादा उनको दे सकते हैं उसके बाजाय ३६ रुपये प्रति मन दे रहे थे और अब आप उन्हें दोगे ३७ रुपये ८५ नये पैसे प्रति मन।

आप चाहते हैं कि चीनी का उत्पादन बढ़े और यह अच्छा भी है और सब यह चाहते हैं लेकिन चीनी के उत्पादन का बढ़ाने का यह कोई तरीका नहीं है कि जब किसान कहें कि हमारे गन्ने की कीमत बढ़ा दी जाय तो गन्ने की कीमत के साथ आप चीनी की कीमत भी बढ़ाते जायें मिलमालिकान को ज्यादा कीमत देते चले जायें तो इससे काम चलने वाला नहीं है। यह गलत पालिसी है। भ्रफसोस होता है कि एक खाद्य मंत्री के बाद दूसरे खाद्य मंत्री आते हैं लेकिन जहाँ तक चीनी की मूल नीति है चीनी की कीमत और गन्ने की कीमत की मूल नीति का सम्बन्ध है, उसमें किसी परिवर्तन की बात नहीं सोची जाती है। हमारे नये खाद्य मंत्री महोदय श्री पाटिल यह उपदेश करते फिरते हैं कि चीनी का खर्चा कम करो और चीनी कम खाओ। यह खर्चा उस जनता के लिए हो सकता है। बहुत से लोग ऐसे होते हैं जो कि खा नहीं सकते। मैं पूछना चाहता हूँ श्री पाटिल या दूसरे और इन जैसे कितने ऐसे लोग हैं जिन्होंने कि चीनी का खर्चा कम कर दिया है। यह हो नहीं सकता है। तो इस तरह के उपदेश से कोई फायदा नहीं होता। मैं कहना चाहूँगा कि मूल नीति जो चीनी के सम्बन्ध में है, गन्ने के बारे में है, उस पर विचार किया जाय। चीनी का उत्पादन बढ़ा है मगर पिछले साल से इस साल जो उसका उत्पादन हुआ वह कम हुआ। यही नहीं उत्तर प्रदेश की विधान सभा में वहाँ के डिप्टी मिनिस्टर ने एक सप्लीमेंटरी के जवाब में बतलाया कि १९५६-५७ में वहाँ उत्तर प्रदेश में जो कि ५० फीसदी चीनी पैदा करता है, सारे देश में उसमें चीनी का उत्पादन था २९४'१८ लाख मन, १९५७-५८ में २५६'४२ लाख मन था और सन १९५८-५९ में २४१'५० लाख मन था अर्थात् लगातार चीनी का उत्पादन उत्तर प्रदेश में घट रहा है। अब हम इस स्थिति में आसँ भ्रोजल नहीं कर सकते कि उत्तर प्रदेश जो कि ५० फीसदी चीनी पैदा करता है वहाँ पर लगातार उत्पादन

बट रहा है। इसकी क्या वजह है? अपनी पिछले साल भी गन्ने के उत्पादकों ने कुछ इस तरह की बातें कही कि गन्ना रोका गया। इस साल तो वह तब किये हुए है कि १५ दिसम्बर से वह हड़ताल करेंगे। आप बतौर इंसैन्टिव के तीन आने मन गन्ने की कीमत बढ़ा कर और इसका प्रलोभन देकर गन्ने का उत्पादन बढ़ाना चाहते हैं लेकिन उसके साथ साथ बिना कुछ कहे जो चीनी बनाने वाले फेक्टरीज के मालिक हैं, वह चीनी की कीमत १ रुपये १४ आने प्रति मन के हिसाब से बढ़ा देते हैं। देखना यह है कि इस तरीके से आया चीनी का उत्पादन बढ़ने की कोई आशा बंध रही है या नहीं। मैं चाहूंगा कि खाद्य मंत्री महोदय इस पर मूल रूप से सोचने की कृपा करें। अगर वाकई चीनी का उत्पादन हमें बढ़ाना है तो क्या इस तरीके से वह बढ़ सकेगा? आप कह सकते हैं कि आपकी पुलिस है और अगर गन्ना उत्पादक हड़ताल करेंगे तो पुलिस उनको गिरफ्तार कर लेगी। कानून का हथियार आपके पास है। आपका कानून है, आप गोली चला सकते हैं, लाठी चला सकते हैं लेकिन आप यह मत भूलिये कि आप कुछ भी क्यों न चलायें, लेकिन आप किसी भी गन्ना उत्पादक को जबरदस्ती यह नहीं कह सकते हैं कि नहीं तुम्हें अपनी चीज बेचनी ही पड़ेगी। गन्ना उत्पादक कह सकते हैं कि हम अपना गन्ना नहीं बेचते और जाहिर है कि अगर वह गन्ना नहीं बेचेगे तो चीनी का उत्पादन जरूर कम हो जायगा। मैं चाहूंगा कि इस पर जरा सहानुभूतिपूर्वक विचार किया जाय। मैं तो आपसे कहूंगा कि कीमत के सवाल को और चीनी की कीमत के सवाल को मूल रूप से एक कमेटी के सिपुर्द कीजिये। अगर आप खुद इसको तय नहीं कर सकते तो इसके आस्ते एक कमेटी बनाइये जिसमें कि गन्ना उत्पादकों का एक प्रतिनिधि हो, जिसमें सुगर फेक्टरीज के मालिकान का भी अगर वे चाहें तो एक प्रतिनिधि हो, एक गन्ने और चीनी की कीमत के बारे में विशेषज्ञ हो और एक हार्डकोर्ट का जज हो और यह कामका उस कमेटी के सिपुर्द किया जाय जो

कि तीन महीने के अन्दर अपनी रिपोर्ट दे कि वाकई चीनी की कौस्ट प्राइस क्या है और वाकई गन्ने के उत्पादन का खर्च क्या है। यह कहना कि गन्ने के उत्पादन खर्च को हम नहीं लगा सकते कुछ जंचता नहीं है। हमेशा जब भी खेती की पैदावार का हिसाब लगाने का सवाल आता है तो सरकार की तरफ से कह दिया जाता है कि इतना बड़ा मुल्क है और खेती की पैदावार का, उत्पादन के खर्च का हम हिसाब ही नहीं लगा सकते, यह बात आपकी जरा हलक के नीचे नहीं उतरती। आप सीमेंट का हिसाब लगाते हैं, फुड, लोहे व चीनी का हिसाब लगा लेते हैं लेकिन इस देश में ७० फीसदी लोग जो कि खेती की पैदावार करते हैं, उनकी पैदावार का हिसाब आप नहीं लगा सकते। मैं समझता हूँ कि इससे यह काम चलने वाला नहीं है। इसलिए मैं यह कहूंगा कि एक कमेटी के सिपुर्द यह काम किया जाय जो कि यह तय करे कि गन्ने के उत्पादन का खर्च क्या हो। उस पर आप कितना मुनाफा देना चाहते हैं? चीनी के उत्पादन का खर्च क्या हो उस पर आप क्या मुनाफा देना चाहते हैं? मैं विश्वास दिलाता हूँ कि इस तरह की अगर एक कमेटी बने तो मैं उसके सामने साबित कर दूंगा कि तीन आने मन की जो बड़ीतरी गन्ने की कीमत में हुई है, उससे पहले चीनी के उत्पादन का खर्चा सारे टैक्सों को शामिल करते हुए भी किसी सूत्रत में ३१ रुपये ६५ नये पैसे से ज्यादा नहीं आयगा और कोई वजह नहीं है कि आप ३७ रुपये ८५ नये पैसे दें। उससे पहले ३६ रुपये मन की प्राइस लेकर पिछले पांच महीनों में करोड़ों रुपये चीनी के मिलमालिकों ने ठगे हैं और क्या यह उचित होगा कि यह उनकी ठगी लगातार चलती जाय? श्री पाटिल जब खाद्य मंत्री बने तो लोगों में आशा बंधी कि कोई ऐसी कारगर योजना बनाई जायगी जिससे कि चीनी का उत्पादन बढ़े। लेकिन मैं यह साफ कह देना चाहता हूँ कि आपकी इस योजना के देस में चीनी का उत्पादन बढ़ने वाला नहीं है। १५ दिसम्बर से उत्तर प्रदेश

[श्री ब्रजराज सिंह]

में हड़ताल होगी। उसे कोई रोक नहीं सकता। कितनी भी लाठी चले, गोली चले और कुछ भी क्यों न चले यह हड़ताल रुकने वाली नहीं है और वह होकर रहेगी। यह कोई एक थोट अथवा धमकी की बात नहीं है बल्कि एक वास्तविकता है। उसे टालने के लिए यह बहुत ही आवश्यक है कि सरकार जल्दी से जल्दी एक कमेटी का निर्माण करे और उस कमेटी से कहे कि वह तीन महीने के अन्दर अपनी रिपोर्ट दे और कमेटी जो रिपोर्ट दे और फ़ैसला दे, उसको २५ अक्टूबर सन् १९५९ से जब कि आपने यह आडिनेन्स निकाला है व कम्युनिक निकाला है जिसमें कि कीमतें तय की हैं और निकाली हैं, लागू कर दें। अगर कमेटी यह कहे कि तीन आने मन की बढ़ोतरी नहीं बल्कि दो रुपये प्रति मन गन्ने का दाम नियत होना चाहिए और चीनी का दाम रहना चाहिए तो वह हो जाना चाहिए। मेरा विश्वास है कि इसके अलावा और कोई तरीका नहीं है जिससे कि चीनी का उत्पादन बढ़ सके। आप किसी को जबरदस्ती अपनी चीज बेचने के लिये मजबूर नहीं कर सकते और खास तौर से किसान को।

यह कहने के कि अगर गन्ने का उत्पादन बढ़ेगा तो गेहूँ का उत्पादन कम हो जायेगा, बिल्कुल कोई मानी नहीं है। गन्ने के खेत अलग होते हैं। उसके लिए सिंचाई की विशेष सुविधा चाहिए। इसलिए गन्ने का उत्पादन बढ़ने से गेहूँ के उत्पादन पर कोई असर नहीं पड़ सकता। इसलिए मेरा निवेदन है कि अगर कुछ लाख गन्ना उत्पादकों को अच्छी कीमत मिल सकती है तो आप उसके बीच में न आइये। हिन्दुस्तान में केवल ४४ चीनी के कारखानों के मालिक हैं। उन के लिये आप तीस लाख गन्ना उत्पादकों के हितों की कुरबानी मत कीजिये, और अगर आप उनकी कुरबानी करेंगे तो नतीजा यह होगा कि यह चीनी का प्रश्न हल नहीं होगा। सरकारी आँकड़े इस बात को साबित कर रहे हैं। मेरे पास वक्त

नहीं है नहीं तो मैं डिबेल में जाता। मैं केवल इतना ही कहना चाहता हूँ कि इसके अलावा कोई हल नहीं है। इस पर आप गम्भीरता से विचार करें। इस मामले को एक कमेटी के सिपुर्द कीजिये और उससे कहिये कि तीन महीने के अन्दर इस मामले को तै करे और गन्ना उत्पादकों से कहिये कि जो इस कमेटी का फ़ैसला होगा वह हमको मान्य होगा। जब तक आप ऐसा नहीं करेंगे तब तक गन्ना उत्पादकों में जो असन्तोष की लहर फैली हुई है वह शान्त नहीं हो सकती। यह सरकार की गलती के कारण है कि उत्पादन कम होता जा रहा है। इसका क्या कारण है इसको सोचने की कृपा कीजिये। मैं पाटिल साहब से कहूँगा कि वह दोनों हाथों में साहस बटोर कर हिम्मत से सामने आयें

Mr. Chairman: The hon. Member should remember what I have said in the beginning. He has already taken 15 minutes. The hon. Minister wants 15 minutes. So, he is practically depriving the other hon. Members from having a say in the matter. He is entitled to make a short statement and not a speech.

श्री ब्रजराज सिंह : मैं इतना कहते हुए खत्म किये देता हूँ कि इस समस्या का इसके सिवा और कोई हल नहीं है।

Shri Panigrahi (Puri): Mr. Chairman, I would like to submit before the hon. Minister that in spite of giving the production incentives, it has been estimated that the production may not go beyond 21 lakh tons of sugar in the coming year. It has also been estimated that the minimum consumption of sugar in the country is 22.5 lakh tons. So, in spite of giving these production incentives, there is a shortfall of 1.5 lakh tons of sugar which the country needs for consumption.

The hon. Minister has sometime ago made a statement that the Government intends to have a buffer stock of sugar

just as he has said the Government intends to have a buffer stock of food-grains. He has also said that Government intends to have a buffer stock of sugar up to 2,05,000 tons. From which source does the hon. Minister want to build this buffer stock so that even if the production falls by 1.5 lakh tons the hon. Minister is going to meet the shortfall in production even in spite of the production incentives that the Government has given to the sugar millowners and to the cane growers?

There is another apprehension in the minds of the public and that is whether Government will really be in a position to supply sugar at reasonable rates to the consumers. Now Government intends to increase the ex-mill price of sugar. We would like to know a clearcut policy of the Government with regard to the increase of ex-mill price of sugar as to whether the Government has come to any decision with regard to that.

The hon. Deputy Minister yesterday gave the different quotas which have been allotted to the different States totalling nearly 175,000 tons of sugar. What is the basis of giving these quotas? I find from the figures that Orissa, for example, has been given 24,805 tons, Rajasthan 62,000-odd and Mysore 89,000. Are the quotas given according to the needs of the States? In that case, West Bengal and Orissa may need more. So, is it according to the needs of the States, or is it arbitrarily fixed?

The hon. Deputy Minister has admitted that in different States, sugar selling in the open shops is higher than in the Government-controlled shops. How does this sugar pass on from the Government shops to the retail shops? Government is supplying sugar to the State Governments or their nominees. Quotas are allotted to them. How is it that this sugar passes on to the other shops in the open market where it is sold at a higher price? What steps are Government taking to prevent this?

Even if Government provides production incentives, there must be some control over the distribution system. Government must come somewhere into the picture. Otherwise it is no use because the sugar finds its way to the open market where it is sold at a higher price. So, this needs clarification.

I hope the hon. Minister will make a clear and categorical statement with regard to the sugar policy that the Government wants to formulate so that the people may hope that the price will come down within a reasonable period. During the last six or nine months this has continued and the price of sugar has not come down. In Orissa it is selling at Rs. 2 even though they have allotted 21,000 tons. Where has it gone? Therefore, this needs clarification, and I hope the Government will have a clear-cut policy with regard to sugar so that within the next one month the retail price of sugar will come down and the consumers will be able to get it at the minimum price.

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri S. K. Patil): I am very sorry that the Members who wanted to speak could not get an opportunity.

Shri Narayanankutty Menon (Mukandapuram): I may be allowed to say a few words. My name is also there.

Mr. Chairman: How can I accommodate all the seven Members?

Shri Narayanankutty Menon: I may be allowed to put a question.

Mr. Chairman: Let him reply.

Shri S. K. Patil: The Speaker determined it should be half an hour. It is not that I am shirking my responsibility. I would really like people to explain their difficulties so that I can also explain to them what my difficulties are. There are two points.

Shri Khushwaqt Rai: Why not agree to a two-hour discussion on sugarcane prices?

Shri S. K. Patil: I am not against it.

Two points have really emerged out of the questions that have been asked respectively by Shri Braj Raj Singh and Shri Panigrahi. One is about the price of sugarcane on which emphasis was laid by the first speaker. Another was: why the prices are rocketing in the market in spite of the quotas? These are very vital points indeed on which Government policy has got to be explained.

My hon friend Shri Braj Raj Singh attributed to me or to my colleague something which we had not said. I had not said that the prices of sugar or sugarcane will have any effect on the production of wheat which would become less. I was merely referring to the remark that hon Member Shri Tyagi had made. Actually that is not my view and the figures are worth knowing for the purpose of understanding what the sugar position is.

The area under cane cultivation has been steadily on the increase year after year. Last year it fell a little bit, but otherwise it is steadily on the increase. In 1953-54 the area under cane cultivation was 3.48 million acres. It went up to 3.99 million acres in 1954-55 and 5.08 million acres in 1957-58. There was then a slight drop to 4.83 million acres. It was not a big drop, I think it was only by about 0.25 million acres or so. But when you compare it to the total acreage of India under all crops, including the food crops etc you will find that the total acreage is somewhere about 300 million acres. Out of that, even this maximum which we did in 1957-58, namely 5 million acres comes to somewhere about 1.7 per cent. That is all. Out of that, crystal sugar to which this reference is, is only one-third, because gur, the molasses and khandsari account for two-thirds of it. Therefore, out of that 1.7 per cent, if you see what comes to the lot of crystalline sugar out of the total acreage of India under all the crops, this is what you will find; it is just 0.6 or something less than 0.6 per cent. Therefore, it is wrong to say that the

production of wheat will be less etc. Wheat production and rice production are in terms of millions of acres. Therefore, this 0.6 per cent is not going to affect it. What I said was that these were competitive crops so far as the prices were concerned. The farmer has sometimes got to make a choice as to whether he should have more land under wheat or under rice or under sugarcane, for, that will determine the emoluments or the cash that he gets out of it. I was referring only to that extent to wheat production etc. That should not be taken to mean that wheat production will suffer etc. It will not suffer. I agree with the hon Member.

The quantity of sugarcane produced has all the time been increasing. The reason is application of fertilisers etc, better farming skill, better methods of farming, better irrigation and so on. From 43.8 million tons in 1953-54, which means six years ago, it has gone up to 70.9 million tons, which, though not double, means an increase of about 70 per cent during these six years. I do not say that that is a very phenomenal increase. We must have even greater increase. But the increase from 43.8 million tons to 70.1 million tons is not a small increase. I am talking only of the sugarcane. One-tenth of it, as the hon. Members know, is the actual crystalline sugar that one would get, khandsari and the other things would be less; they will not be one-tenth.

The increased production of sugarcane has naturally resulted in increased production of sugar, because ten per cent of it is the sugar, and, therefore, it is steadily increasing. But the phenomenon is this. How is it that we had the stocks before, but we have no stocks now? That can easily be explained, because during 1953-54, and four years after that, during the regime of my esteemed predecessor, the late Shri Kidwai, we imported 14 lakhs tons of sugar from foreign countries. Then, there was not the difficulty of the foreign exchange that we have now. Sugar was found necessary, and, therefore, it was imported, and,

therefore, we had some stocks remaining with us. For, 14 lakhs is not a small thing. Even our annual consumption was not 14 lakhs during those years when sugar was imported. Therefore, we had got some kind of a reserve from which we could draw upon from time to time. That reserve has now been exhausted. This House must realise, and I shall repeat that, that unless an emergency comes up, a national emergency where something happens, and we have got to import, Government are not going to import any sugar. And we must train ourselves to square up our needs, so square up our demand and supply that we produce enough in the country. If we produce a little less, then there must be some kind of sacrifices, if it comes to that. But, surely, if anybody expects that because there is less production by two or three per cent, therefore, I must immediately go to the foreign markets and mortgage my little foreign exchange and bring sugar into this country, I would say that that is not going to happen.

A very relevant question was raised by the first speaker as to how I was going to have a quarter million tons of sugar reserve, which I wanted to build up. I have said in this House before, and I shall repeat it that so far as the 5 million tons reserve for wheat and rice is concerned, it could be built up by internal resources, and if it comes to that, if we have no internal resources, then it could be built up from foreign resources. But so far as sugar is concerned, I am going to rely entirely on the internal resources, in order to have more and more production.

As to the question whether the incentives given are adequate, I cannot say just now; time alone will show. If incentives are necessary, they have to be given. But in a country where sugar production could be multiplied, because we are even thinking of exporting a quota of sugar, surely it would be wrong to think that we should spend our millions of foreign exchange in order to import some quantity of sugar.

श्री विभूति मिश्र (बगहा) : एक प्रश्न में माननीय मंत्री जी से पृथ्ना चाहता हूँ। इस साल हमारे देश में १६ लाख टन चीनी पदा हुई, ३ लाख ३७ हजार टन पिछला स्टॉक था, इस तरह हमारे पास इस साल २२ लाख ३७ हजार टन चीनी थी जब कि हमारा खर्चा २० लाख टन ही है। फिर भी बाजार में चीनी की स्करसिटी क्यों हो गई ?

Shri S. K. Patil: I will explain. What is happening is this. Five or six years ago, our consumption was only 10 lakh tons—I am talking only of crystal sugar. Now it has doubled or more than doubled. It has become 20 lakh tons. There the hon. Member is right. I am glad about it, because people are eating more sugar and they are becoming sweeter and sweeter. The difficulty is short-lived. I do not think that people should permanently eat less sugar and be bitter about it. No, they should have their sugar. But we have got to produce it. That is the question.

How do we do that? A question was asked. If we produce less, how am I to build those reserves? Precisely for that purpose, these incentives have been given. Those incentives are of two kinds. So far as the sugar price is concerned, the hon. Member knows that all these three States, the main States in the north, namely, UP, Bihar and Punjab, had themselves asked for Rs 1-12-0. Now, I have given Rs. 1-10-0. Because of the competition that is there, I have to increase the prices of other commodities. You could quite understand what a terrific reaction it has got on our Plan, on our economy, on everything. It is not so very easy to say: why not give Re. 1 to wheat and Re. 1 to rice also? If it was so easy as that, I would be most willing indeed to do it.

Instead, we have done it in two ways, and I am sure it will be productive of very salutary results. One is that from Rs 1-7-0, we have raised it to Rs. 1-10-0. Annas two less than they had asked. But at the other end what we have done is this. If more production is achieved than the average of the last two years,

[Shri S. K. Patil]

then we shall do two things. We shall consider also how it should be disposed of so that more facilities should be given to the trade or to those who produce it. That stage will come later when actually production is more. But more than that, we shall knock off half our excise revenue. That comes to Rs. 4-2-0 per maund of sugar. If you work it out on sugarcane, it means Annas 66 per maund of cane. Therefore, you can say that towards the end when it is possible to get more to the extent of this amount, it has got to be shared with the sugarcane grower, otherwise, he will go and sell to the khandasari and gur people, and the factories would be deprived of it

Therefore, this incentive, which was given once before, should bring good results. We are quite sure that in order to get more money out of it, they would do so, so that this amount would not go into the pocket of the mill people, because it is the option of the man who sells sugarcane whether he should sell to one or the other. If he gets more money from the khandasari-wala or the gur-wala, naturally he will sell to him.

Therefore, we want to tag it on with that. If anything goes wrong in our expectations, we can also supply some kind of a method by which this could be shared with the man who actually produces sugarcane. But ultimately, if we work it out, it will result in two things. That man will get Rs. 1-10-0 and something more; it may even be Rs. 1-12-0 in the end, a little more or a little less. At the same time, there will be a tendency on the part of the growers to see that lots of cane that go to khandasari and gur would be diverted towards crystal sugar where we shall have more percentage of sugar. If we get 100 per cent in the case of crystal sugar, we get only 60 per cent in khandasari or gur.

Therefore, there would be better utilisation of the sugarcane, so far as scientific extraction of sugarcane is concerned. Hence we have to wait and see how this functions.

Having said that, there is one very important point: why are prices rocketing in the market? I am very uneasy on this score, because this feature is not a good thing. But the House must know that so far as the distribution of sugar is concerned it is not the responsibility of the Government of India.

If anybody wants that the Government of India should take the responsibility.....

श्री बिभूति : सभापति जी मैं एक बात कहना चाहता हूँ। बगहा में शुगर फैक्टरी है। उस फैक्टरी से बगहा के स्टॉक ट को चीनी नहीं दी गई बल्कि ३० मील दूर हरिनगर से उसको चीनी दी गई। इसी कारण चीनी का दाम बढ़ जाता है। आपका डिस्ट्रिब्यूशन क सिस्टम ही गलत है जिसके कारण दाम बढ़ता है।

Shri S. K. Patil: One illustration does not prove the whole point. Something may be wrong in that particular sugar mill to which the hon. Member refers. I am talking of a general question. In an emergency or even in normal times, the distribution of sugar is going to be the responsibility of the State. The House must understand that food production and agriculture are one hundred per cent the responsibility of the State Governments. We simply come in for continues to be sold at Rs. 1½ or Re. 1 a little co-ordination and when things are to be imported from outside and foreign exchange is necessary. That is why we have made some laws in order to co-ordinate this activity. But we cannot go further. If you seriously mean taking the responsibility of distributing food to the 370 million people, it is an impossible responsibility so far as the Central Government is concerned. These matters have got to be taken by the State Government. My hon. friend, Shri Panigrahi, has asked: why only 24,000 tons were given to Orissa and so much more to Rajasthan? May be, they are fond of more sweets. I congratulate the people of Orissa that

they do not spoil their health by having as much sweets as perhaps Rajasthan or Bombay or other places. But these figures are based on the usual or normal consumption. There are people in Bombay and a lot of sugar is consumed not only in the last one or two years but for many years. It is not because of the show of any discrimination against Orissa but because we have studied the figures as to what was actually going on even before the quota system. We found that it was about 20,000 tons and we are steadily increasing that. The increase is also of the order of somewhere about 75,000 tons every year because the population is increasing and it is not in your power or my power to decrease that population. It increases in spite of us. Our tastes are also improving because we now want to drink tea and coffee. It is a good thing. Why not drink tea or coffee? One good thing for the last 5-6 years is that more millions of people in this country are having some kind of a drink whether it is tea or coffee and that is why they require sugar.

An hon. Member: Why not have more bear also?

Shri S. K. Patil: That is not in my field. So, these are the facts that have got to be faced. We must increasingly produce 75,000 tons and possibly it may go even to 100,000 tons as the population increases and the habits of the people improve. All these factors are taken into consideration.

We fix up the price of sugarcane and give incentives. If my friends feel that these incentives are not enough, it is an arguable point. There is no finality so far as the Government is concerned. We shall watch. After all this is an experiment and you cannot merely say that in one particular crop you will go at a tangent while the other crops remain where they are.

The hon. Member suggested: why not have a kind of a committee appointed. I shall go a step further.

I will take this House into confidence. Ever since I have taken over this Ministry, I have been thinking of this. How can a Minister, however capable he may be—I am not suggesting that I am capable, but even then—consider all these things such as the price structure, what happens to it, the conditions of the soil and so on. It is impossible. Even if a Brahaspathi was created—a new one—and he were to accept this portfolio of Food and Agriculture, it would not be possible for him to see through these things minutely and consider these thousands of points and come to the conclusion as to what exactly should be the price structure. Therefore, I have got a scheme under consideration to be immediately put into action. I should have a statutory board for the fixation of the prices of all crops including sugarcane. That will sit day after day. It will not only be an *ad hoc* committee. It will have under review and examination constantly all the changes that are coming up and affecting the price structure and so on. Then, there is the Tariff Commission. The hon. Member knows it very well that these prices are not merely governed by us. The Tariff Commission also sits on it; it has a study of it though the recommendations have not come before you. But I could say that they were not asked to give their opinion on the prices of the sugarcane, but based on the prices of sugarcane they were asked to give the prices of sugar. Therefore, they have evolved a formula and the Government cannot go outside that formula after having accepted it. Therefore, you could see why the ex-factory price of sugar had to be increased.

If I go at this rate, Mr. Chairman, it will take a long time. But I think these two things which I have explained are enough to show to the House that whatever is possible has been done; Government is doing that and shall be doing that. Government will examine this policy day after day until the incentives prove sufficient not only adequately to meet the sugar

[Shri S. K. Patil]

consumption but also to give me something by which my quarter of a million tons of stock could be built up.

One more aspect and I have done. I have said that whenever these prices rise, we the consumers who go and buy are not less responsible for that also. If a man is selling sugar at unconscionably high prices, at Rs. 2 or Rs. 3 per seer, I have, not as Minister but as a citizen of India, got the right to say that "I shall refuse to buy that sugar". We actually aid these bad practices and these evil practices and we say that instead of one pound let us buy five pounds because we shall not get enough hereafter. So, we buy the sugar whatever be the price. The black market thrives on a two way traffic. It is not one-way traffic. So, far as it lies within our power, we must resolve that, whatever, it be, rice or wheat or sugar, we should not buy it when a bad advantage is taken by the seller, the middleman or the trader or anybody. No matter who does it; surely we must stand up and say that we shall not buy that. If a citizen shows that kind of responsibility, even for a week, you will see the salutary effect of it on the market. I speak like that not because I say that should eat less of sugar. One hon. Member asked what the Food Minister buys. Of course, the personal example is a good example. But I can say that for many years now I am not a sugar-eater.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur (Pali): But how have you managed to be sweeter than sugar today?

Shri S. K. Patil: There are elements that can be had and which are sweeter than sugar too, and the milk of human kindness is much sweeter than what we can produce as any other alternative.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: By what time will the statutory board be appointed?

Shri Narayanaakruty Menon: The hon. Minister said that it is not the responsibility of the Central Government as far as the distribution is concerned. There is one State where it is the direct responsibility of the Central Government to distribute sugar. In the Kerala State, for the last four months no sugar has been given at controlled rate except during the last week of October. The hon. Deputy Minister went on saying that every month supplies have been given by the Central Government to the Kerala Government. All that I want to know is, why no steps were taken in order to distribute this sugar at controlled prices and why sugar continues to be sold at Rs. 1½ or Re. 1 in every town and village in Kerala State. What steps has the Government taken to see that sugar is distributed at controlled rates?

Shri S. K. Patil: So far as Kerala State is concerned, I can quite understand. I was not prepared for that aspect of the matter. I would go into the question and find out what it is. After all, the responsibility of the Government of India is going to be continued only for the next three or four months. It is not a permanent responsibility. Even then I could understand it. If anything better could be done by way of a more scientific distribution it shall be our duty to see that it is done.

Shri Khushwaqt Rai: By what time would that board or committee be appointed?

Shri S. K. Patil: In a month or two. It is going to be a statutory body in which the farmers themselves will be largely represented, those who exactly know their job. But the whole thing will come before Parliament. I merely anticipated it, and said that instead of having a small committee let us have a permanent answer to the question.

Shri Khushwaqt Rai: Will it come before this session ends?

Shri B. K. Galkwad (Nasik): Where sugar is produced by the factories, it is controlled by the Central Excise Department, if I mistake it not. Moreover, the distribution is done by the Central Government or the State Government, whatever it may be. If it is so, how is it that sugar goes into the black market and sold there?

Shri S. K. Patil: Distribution is done by the State Governments. But my hon friend knows that it is not

done in the fashion of rations, etc. It is given to one dealer and in every State the system differs. The difficulty arose because of scarcity. Wait for a few weeks; you will find that these things do not exist because that scarcity is being very speedily resolved.

17 40 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, November 24, 1959/Agrahayana 3, 1881 (Saka).