

SHRI PAMPAN GOWDA : I want to know whether there is any proposal before the Government to strengthen the armed forces both numerically as well as qualitatively to meet the challenges if they arise in future.

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA : We have said about this matter several times in the House. We have an overall plan and we review our defence preparedness and take various steps from time to time, in view of whatever information we receive about possible threat to our security and these are matters which are going on continuously and there it is a strange question to ask whether we do it or not.

MR. SPEAKER : He did not put the question but he gave some information independent of the question; you are answering...

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA : I thought you had allowed, unless you ask me not to answer. About defence preparedness we keep this constantly under review.

SHRI PAMPAN GOWDA : What are the impressions of the visiting chief of Yugoslavia ?

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SINHA : What are the places which the Army Chief visited ? Did he give any suggestion with regard to any of our beauty spots or ordnance depots ?

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA : He visited Bombay, Himatnagar, Khajuraho, Agra, Jodhpur, Jaipur, Dehra Dun and other places.

SHRI PILOO MODY : What is in Khajuraho ?

SHRI R. P. ULAGANAMBI : May I know whether they are visiting the country on the invitation extended by our Government ? What is the purpose of their visit ?

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA : They visit our country on invitation; no such dignity comes without invitation. Our people are also invited in like manner. These are reciprocal.

SHRI PILOO MODY : They go without invitation...

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA : None of us ever go without invitation.

SHRI PILOO MODY : Mr. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed visited Rabat.

SHRI S. A. KADER : In view of the invitation extended by our country some itinerary of the visit must have been prepared by us. If so, does the itinerary include such other places like Khajuraho ?

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA : I think this supplementary question does not relate to the main question.

SHRI S. A. KADER : The hon. Minister himself had referred to the itinerary. Since he was invited for a purpose, may I know whether a visit to this place was also included in that purpose ?

SHRI K. MANOHARAN : After the purpose is over, he had recreation.

MR. SPEAKER : I think that this question need not be answered. After all, he was invited here. He came here and he went away.

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY : When we invited such Chiefs of Army are we going to discuss with them our problems ?

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA : These visits are mainly good-will visits. Naturally, during discussions with the counterparts, some matters of mutual interest come, but it is not necessary that our problems have to be discussed with visiting Chiefs of Staff from other countries, but if we have any mutual problems or things of mutual interest, we do discuss such things.

प्रामाण क्षेत्रों में मिट्टी के तेल की कमी

*411. श्री नाथूराम अहिरवार : क्या पेट्रोलियम और रसायन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार को इस बात की जान-

कारी है कि पिछले छः मास से ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में मिट्टी के तेल की कमी है;

(ख) क्या यह कमी तेल व्यापारियों द्वारा जमाखोरी के कारण अथवा देश में तेल के उत्पादन में कमी के कारण है; और

(ग) इस कमी को पूरा करने के लिए सरकार ने कौन से ठोस कदम उठाए हैं ?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE AND PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI H. R. GOKHALE) : (a) Except during the month of December, 1971, when, because of the state of emergency, the State Governments were requested to exercise checks on the consumption of Kerosene, and if necessary, to introduce rationing with a view to conserving stocks, kerosene supplies have been maintained without any restrictions to meet the full requirements of the country. There has been no general complaint of shortages in the rural areas.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

श्री नाथूराम अहिरवार : माननीय मंत्री महोदय ने प्रश्न के उत्तर में बतलाया कि दिनाम्बर मे इमर्जेन्सी की वजह से कैरोमिन की शार्टेज हुई। मैं कह सकता हूँ कि आज भी देहातों में डेढ़ रुपए लिटर मिट्टी का तेल मिल रहा है। जब छोटे दुकानदार पेट्रोल पम्पों के डिपो पर जाते हैं तो डीलर कहते हैं कि तेल की कमी है लेकिन अगर वही दुकानदार देहातों में चले जाते हैं तो उनको डेढ़ रुपए लिटर मिट्टी के तेल का दाम देना पड़ता है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि सरकार इसके लिए क्या कर रही है ?

SHRI H. R. GOKHALE : First of all, complaints of isolated shortages do arise, but these are due to factors such as interruptions in despatches due to breaches of rail track, accidents, strikes etc. I am not saying that at no place cases of hoarding etc. have not occurred. But as the hon. Member knows, so far as we are concerned, we allot quotas on yearly basis to the State Governments and the

State Governments carry out the distribution to the retail dealers, and they have been authorised under the Essential Commodities Act, when complaints are brought to their notice, to take appropriate action. If the hon. Member has any particular place in mind, I would request him to bring it to the notice of the State Government.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : Will the hon. Minister kindly tell us whether it is a fact or not that there were a number of allegations from West Bengal that there was acute shortage of kerosene supply due to extensive blackmarketing in Kerosene, and also whether it is not a fact that the chief of the IOC in the eastern region who was involved in a big blackmarketing of kerosene happened to be the son of a State Governor ?

SHRI H. R. GOKHALL : I am not aware of extensive or large-scale complaints having been received from the State of West Bengal. I am also not aware of any such allegation as has been made by the hon. Member with regard to the officer of the IOC.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : But this gentleman used to stay in the Governor's house at the time when Shri Dharma Vira was Governor. Everybody used to know it.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : Again, we are involved in trouble. I want to remain peaceful. It came out in the press and in several papers in Calcutta a number of letters were written. I had myself written a letter. And yet the hon. Minister pleads ignorance. How long will they go on behaving like this in this House ? It is up to you to judge and set them right.

MR. SPEAKER : I am worried about the hon. Member also.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : Why should you have one eye, Sir ? You should have two eyes.

SHRI RAJA KULKARNI : How is it that the hon. Minister is not aware of the artificial shortage of kerosene created by dealers after the recent increase in the kerosene levy ?

SHRI H. R. GOKHALE : I did not say I was not aware of it. I was referring to the question regarding Bengal. I am aware that the large price differential between kerosene and HSD has been a big inducement for the misuse of kerosene and this has had the effect of reducing the availability of this product in one part of the country or another. It is not unlikely that rural areas may also have been hit in this we have, however, no complaints on record from State Governments to support this.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH : In view of the fact that there is an acute shortage of kerosene not only because of inadequate production but also because of black-marketing indulged in by dealers, what steps do Government propose to take to increase the production of kerosene oil ?

SHRI H. R. GOKHALE : As for production in the country, I would point out that a substantial part of our requirements is met by indigenous production and a comparatively smaller part is met by import. To give the figures for 1967-71, while in 1967 production was to the tune of 2,024,000 tonnes imports were to the tune of 448,000 tonnes whereas the demand was 2,580,000 tonnes. In 1971, production was 2,991,000 tonnes and import only 600,000 tonnes, while the demand was 3,461,000 tonnes. The demand has been met by supplementing indigenous production by the necessary amount of import.

SHRIMATI M. GODFREY : As the hon. Minister says that there is no general shortage, may I ask whether he would instruct the States to bring down the price of kerosene as there is blackmarketing going on in this commodity ?

SHRI H. R. GOKHALE : I presume the hon. lady Member is asking whether it is possible to bring down the price of kerosene.

AN HON. MEMBER : She referred to blackmarketing.

SHRI H. R. GOKHALE : So far as blackmarketing is concerned, the law has taken care of it. As far as I am informed, all State Governments, when complaints are

made with regard either to hoarding or blackmarketing, do take action under the Essential Commodities Act against all erring dealers indulging in blackmarketing and hoarding. If specific instances are brought to my notice, I may assure the hon. Member that we will bring them to the notice of the concerned State Governments for taking appropriate action.

डा० लक्ष्मीनारायण पांडेय : विभिन्न प्रदेशों को आपके द्वारा दिये जाने वाला कोटा समान रूप से विरित नहीं किया जाता। उसी का यह नतीजा है कि बहुत से प्रदेशों में कैरोसीन आयल की बहुत ज्यादा कमी अनुभव होने लग जाती है। यही कारण क्या नहीं है कि मध्य प्रदेश को दिया जाने वाला तेल इतना अपर्याप्त रहा कि दूर दूर तक गाँवों में वह नहीं पहुँच सका और यही कारण है कि गाँव वालों को महंगे दामों पर कैरोसीन आयल खरीदना पड़ रहा है ?

SHRI H. R. GOKHALE : The supply of kerosene State-wise is on the basis of previous consumption. Estimates are made on yearly and monthly requirements also. In spite of these estimates, oil companies have been instructed not to rely only on these estimates but to supply larger or lesser quantities depending upon the actual position. As far as I am aware, the MP Government had been awarded a quota on this principle of past consumption in the relevant year on an annual and monthly estimate basis. If there is a shortage, as the hon. Member says, and it is brought to my notice—I am sure the State Government would have brought it to my notice—the oil companies will be instructed to supplement the quota.

चीन द्वारा उद्‌जन बम का विस्फोट

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*412 श्री ईश्वर चौधरी :

श्री चित्ताराम पाणिग्रही :

क्या रक्षा मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या चीन ने हाल ही में एक उद्‌जन बम का विस्फोट किया है;