

Head Office charges, interest, managing fees, current dividends that accumulated dividends.

**SHRI YESHWANTRAO CHAVAN:** I have given the total figures. I have not got the break-up of it.

**SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU:** May I repeat the question? I have given notice because these are the outlets through which our money goes abroad.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The question asked is about the total amount and no break-up has been asked.

**SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU:** They should have the break-up also.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Now, the Question-Hour is over.

Next question is also yours, Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu.

**SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU:** Short Notice Question No. 7.

**SHRI SAMAR GUHA:** On a point of order, Sir, I have also tabled almost a similar question with various parts. . . .

**SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD:** You can put a supplementary. What is wrong?

**MR. SPEAKER:** It is not very essential that it must be in your name. You can ask a supplementary question.

**SHRI S. M. BANERJEE:** When we referred to the matter under Rule 377, you asked the Minister to make a statement. Sir, I would only request you not to consider only Bengal, but the country as a whole . . . (*Interruptions*).

**SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU:** I have written to the Minister to that effect.

**SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA:** Shortage is there in Delhi also.

#### SHORT NOTICE QUESTION NO. 7

Shortage of Kerosene Oil in Rural Areas of South 24 Parganas, West Bengal

**S.N.Q. 7. SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU:** Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the prevalence of acute shortage of Kerosene oil in the rural areas of South 24 Parganas West Bengal; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken to meet it?

**THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI D. K. BOROOAH):** (a) and (b). Reports of sporadic shortages of kerosene oil are being received since March 1973 from all parts of the country, including the rural areas of South 24-Parganas of West Bengal. The basic reason for these

shortages has been the deliberate decision taken to reduce commencing from March, 1973, the indigenous production of kerosene oil and to correspondingly increase the production of diesel oils, both high speed diesel oil and light diesel oil, with a view to meeting the sharply increased requirements of diesel oils due to widespread drought conditions and extensive power cuts. The increased production of diesel oils was required initially for lift irrigation and for standby power generation purposes and is presently required for harvesting, thrashing and the movement of crops and for power generation. This decision had to be taken on account of the prevailing world-wide shortage of crude oil and refined oil products. All possible efforts have been and continue to be made to maximise the imports of diesel oils and kerosene oil jointly known as middle distillates by deputing teams of officers of the Indian Oil Corporation to foreign countries. This measure has enabled the import or the finalisation of import of 154,000 tonnes of middle distillates since March 1973. The position is being reviewed constantly and the cut in kerosene production which is being presently of the order of 20 per cent is proposed to be partially restored in June and fully in July 1975.

**SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU:** I am glad that the Minister has covered a wide ground and has taken quite a broad perspective. The availability of kerosene oil in 1971 was 55.94 lakh metric tonnes and the figures for 1972 and 1973 are 36.47 and 39.01 lakh metric tonnes respectively. During the last three years how much oil was imported? Who were the importers? How much was produced locally? What is the maximum estimated demand in India? May I know whether the scarcity is partly due to the dependence on imports?

**SHRI D. K. BOROOAH:** Sir, during 1973 the total demand of middle distillates under normal condition would be 11.6 million tonnes and as against this the total production is estimated to be of the order of 10.3 million tonnes. There is the gap of 1.3 million tonnes proposed to be covered by resorting to imports. The gap has however been increased and is now expected to be of the order of 2.1 million tonnes on account of the following factors:

(a) Widespread drought conditions resulting in increased use of diesel oils for lift irrigation:

(b) Extensive powercuts necessitating large scale use of diesel oils for power generation.

Against this total deficit 2.1 million tonnes, commitments for imports made so far add up to 1.7 million tonnes. There is thus an uncovered deficit of 0.4 million tonnes.

**SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU:** Who are the importers?

**SHRI D. K. BOROOAH:** IOC is the main importer, the principal importer.

**SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU:** Who are the others?

**SHRI D. K. BOROOAH:** We have asked some oil companies to import, but that will be routed through the IOC.

**SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU:** What portion?

**SHRI D. K. BOROOAH:** ESSO and Burmah-Shell are there. But it is only marginal. It is very small. All will be routed through IOC.

**SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU:** Sir since Dr. Dalbir Singh, the Deputy Minister told us on 27-2-73 that the 'total availability of kerosene oil indigenous and imported is adequate' and also that any quantity of kerosene oil is available in the black market and since one raid in Calcutta resulted in seizure of 5,000 litres, will the hon. Minister tell us how many raids have been conducted for the past one year? What has been the result achieved so far?

**SHRI D. K. BOROOAH:** This decision to reduce the production of kerosene oil and convert into diesel by 20 per cent was taken only in March. So far as the distribution is concerned, distribution is entirely a matter for the State Government and the State Governments are taking steps to see that there is proper distribution.

**SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU:** You go to State capitals and enjoy their hospitality . . .

**SHRI D. K. BOROOAH:** No. I never go to State capitals except Calcutta and in Calcutta I do not enjoy the hospitality of the West Bengal Government.

**SHRI A. K. M. ISHAQUE:** The Minister told us that one of the reasons for scarcity of kerosene oil is its diversion for other uses. Kerosene oil is being used for other purposes. The hon. Minister knows that kerosene is used more in rural areas. It is as essential a commodity as food. Therefore, why did the government take the decision at the cost of the poor people for production of diesel?

**SHRI D. K. BOROOAH:** Sir, it was a very difficult and a hard choice to make. Out of the total procurement of 80 lakh tons 34 lakh tons have to be procured from Punjab; 13 lakh tons from Haryana and 18 lakh tons from western U.P. These three areas provide 65 lakh tons of the total procurement of 80 lakh tons. So, we had to make a choice between procurement of food and foregoing the use of kerosene

in rural areas for the time being because we thought procurement of food is a matter of life and death and a matter of survival for this country.

**SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD:** While supporting the decision of the government that it is inevitable to reduce the production of kerosene and increase diesel oil may I know how government proposed to have alternative sources for villagers of whom 80 per cent are still using kerosene oil? May I also know whether this decision is a temporary or a permanent one?

**SHRI D. K. BOROOAH:** At one time the idea was it should be 25 per cent cut but we made a general cut of 20 per cent. We compensated that by telling the international air companies that they will not get any oil in India and that they will procure from outside. We have curtailed other uses by the Indian Air Force. All that has given us some relief with the result that instead of 25 per cent cut we have only imposed a 20 per cent cut and that too from the month of May.

Sir, we cannot buy kerosene or diesel oil from anywhere. They are not available. We entered into an agreement with Soviet Union and they have given us six hundred thousand tons but this is coming not in one bulk but spread over four to five months. We have also bought another three hundred thousand tons from Kuwait. That is also coming but they do not come all at a time. In Japan due to anti-pollution laws they are using kerosene instead of furnace oil fuel for industrial development. Kerosene does not contain any sulphur whereas furnace oil contains 3.5 per cent sulphur. As the anti-pollution laws have been imposed in Japan they are using kerosene as fuel for industry. That is also one reason.

What we are doing now is we are importing from June 1 million tons of crude from Saudi Arabia and converting it into diesel and kerosene. By this we will get about half a million tons. With that the position would be retrieved around July. Also as soon as harvest season is over pressure on diesel will get reduced and then we can go back to kerosene.

**SHRI S. M. BANERJEE:** I am glad to know that the hon. Minister has taken or is taking all steps to see that the shortage of kerosene is met and the demand of the people is met. But I would like to know whether he is aware that apart from high prices of kerosene oil at which it is available, it is not available in some of the very big cities. I am not talking only of the 24 Parganas, but even in Delhi it is not available anywhere. With great difficulty, I was able to get two litres. If that

was the case with me, you can understand what the position of the common man is. Instead of the entire responsibility being shifted to the State Government, I would like to know what mechanism is there to see that hoarding at least is stopped and proper distribution is made.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: I am grateful to my hon. friend for raising this point, because he has discussed this point about shortage in Delhi in this House before. . . .

MR. SPEAKER: In spite of my vigilance, I find that it is escaping the rule of relevancy.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: At that time, he was sick and he could not make a statement.

MR. SPEAKER: But what is the relevance of that to the main question?

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: I am willing to answer his question.

MR. SPEAKER: If somebody were to read the proceedings tomorrow, he will ask 'who was the presiding officer at that time?'

SHRI JOYTIRMOY BOSU: If they ask me, I shall tell them that it was Dr. Gurdial Singh Dhillon.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: Kindly allow him to reply. He was sick at that time and he could not reply.

MR. SPEAKER: I am allowing everybody, but it should have some relevance to the scope of the main question so that I may not be judged as having sat here blind and deaf.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: May I answer Shri S. M. Banerjee's question?

So far as Delhi is concerned, there is also a cut imposed on Delhi, but Delhi is in a very difficult position. Delhi is surrounded on the one side by Haryana and on the other side by Western UP, and in both these areas, there is great demand for diesel oil and kerosene to be mixed with diesel oil. Secondly, in Delhi, there is no sales tax on kerosene and diesel, but in Haryana and UP there is a sales tax of 7 per cent on kerosene oil and diesel oil. Therefore, in Delhi, there is a tendency for both kerosene and diesel oil to slip into these two territories. . . .

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA: It should be the reverse.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: Therefore, we had a conference with the Government of Delhi, that is, the members of the Metropolitan Council, Delhi and we came to certain conclusions. One of them is that all companies' dealers will be given permits by the Civil Supplies Department of the Delhi

Administration, and the oil companies will give them kerosene only subject to these allocations of the Supplies Department. The Supplies Department will then be able to maintain better control over the disposal of the supply by the dealers. Secondly, the Supplies Department will make special checks of dealers' trucks to see that no adulteration is done, that is, adulteration of diesel with kerosene. The oil companies will give whatever assistance is required in this direction to facilitate this. They will paint the name of the products at the time of loading in the truck, tank and lorry. If a tank carries diesel, it will be declared, and it will be painted that it carries diesel, and if it carries kerosene, it will be painted that it carries kerosene.

Then, we are distributing kerosene oil in retail by tank wagons at 12 points in Delhi in different localities such as Gandhinagar, Shahdara, Vinaynagar, Ramakrishnapuram, Sarai Khalil, Jama Masjid, Basti Harphool-singh, Sadar Bazar, Teliwara and Bara Hindu Rao etc. These areas have been fixed in consultation with the Delhi administration and tank wagons go every day to these areas and sell oil in retail, and every man is entitled to get only 2 litres. That is how we are trying to make kerosene oil available to the common man.

श्री बी० प्रार० शुक्ल : अध्यक्ष महोदय, पूरे देश में एसोशियल कम्पैडिटीज की जो शार्टेंज हो रही है उस के ऊपर सवन में चर्चा होनी चाहिए। हम लोग सब इस के बारे में बहुत एजीटेड हैं। इसलिए इस पर चर्चा का समय अवश्य निकाला जाना चाहिए।

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Lakkappa will kindly sit down. . . . (Interruptions). May I make it clear to those members who are not called, who sometimes stand and start speaking simultaneously that they cannot expect me to listen to them? How do they expect me to do that? I am not a super-human with seven or eight ears to be able to listen to each one of you speaking at one and the same time.

श्री शशि घूषण : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मन्त्री महोदय से मैं जानना चाहूंगा कि मिट्टी का तेल पैट्रोल और डीजल इन की देश में कमी है और एक राष्ट्रीय पॉलिमी हमें इस दिशा में बनानी है। इस सिलसिले में जो पैट्रोल 60 परसेंट लोग बेस्ट करते हैं उस कमी के दौरान में उसके ऊपर क्या मन्त्री महोदय रोगनी डालेंगे कि कुछ पैट्रोल की राशनिय हो, कंट्रोल हो . . .

(व्यवधान)... यह पेट्रोल, डीजल और फेरोसीन तीनों के लिए मैं कह रहा हूँ। सैकड़ों गाड़ियाँ सिनेमा घरों पर खड़ी रहती हैं। वेस्ट होता रहता है। यह एक समस्या है। इसलिए पेट्रोल की राशनिंग हो, उस पर कंट्रोल हो ताकि मिट्टी का तेल और डीजल हम दे सकें, इस सिल सिले में आप क्या करने जा रहे हैं? ... (व्यवधान) ...

अध्यक्ष महोदय, यह बहुत जरूरी है। पेट्रोल का दुरुपयोग होता है और सिर्फ़ अमीर लोग इस्तेमाल करते हैं।

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: The problem is not as simple as has been made out by my hon. friend. For every million tonnes of crude oil, one can produce, according to our refinery pattern, only 48 per cent of middle distillates which consist of kerosene, LSD, HSD etc. Therefore, one cannot have increased production of diesel oil or kerosene at the cost of petrol.

SHRI PILOO MODY: You can, at the cost of tar.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: I will come to that also. If hon. members want a discussion, I am agreeable.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: We want a discussion.

MR. SPEAKER: A discussion is already fixed on this, on all essential commodities.

SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN: This year the Demands of the Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals were not discussed in the House. At least we must have some time to scrutinise the aspect of policy.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSI: As Shri Unnikrishnan said, we have not discussed the Demands of the Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals. During the discussion on essential commodities, a lot of things will be said in regard to many commodities. We have tabled a call attention motion in this regard on one important point. Apart from other things, a lot of adulteration is taking place every day in petrol, including aviation fuel, including kerosene. I submit that there should be a discussion on the scarcity of kerosene and petrol and also on adulteration. The whole thing is linked.

श्री शशि भूषण : मेरे सवाल का जवाब मंत्री महोदय देना चाहते हैं। वह जवाब प्राया ही नहीं। पेट्रोल की राशनिंग और कंट्रोल के बारे में उन का क्या कहना है।

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: As I have said, there has been no shortage of petrol, but there has been shortage of middle distillates which consists of only 40 per cent of the total production.

MR. SPEAKER: Please be brief in your replies.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: The hon. Minister has attributed the reason to the diversion of production to diesel oil. I think that very recently, perhaps a week before, he has asked the international airlines not to have aviation fuel from our country and the Air Force also. I do not understand how these are linked.

Secondly, I want to know from the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that due to certain hostilities between the foreign oil companies and certain vested interests they are purposely creating a shortage of kerosene oil by refusing to import more.

Thirdly, I want to know whether rationing would be introduced for the distribution of kerosene, particularly in the non-electrified areas, that means in the rural areas?

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: His first question was whether the oil companies are not producing enough kerosene. It is not a fact. They are producing according to the pattern. So far as the import is concerned, as I said earlier . . . (Interruption). . .

MR. SPEAKER: Let the Minister give his reply.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: According to the pattern set by the Government, that is to say, produce 25 per cent more diesel oil and 25 per cent less kerosene oil. That is the pattern I have mentioned.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: You are the Government.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: In this case, I happen to be so. The other question was whether they are not importing. Marginally, some diesel oil has been imported by them, but it has been distributed by us and not through them.

We have received a telegram from our embassy in Japan regarding kerosene. They say that the Japanese have regretted their inability in effecting any supply of kerosene due to increased local demand caused by the switch-over by users of heavy oil for anti-pollution control measures.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: What about rationing of petrol and kerosene and distribution through fair price shops?

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: This proposal was also considered and it was thought that because the shortage is going to be of



a short duration it will be a very big strain on the State administration. It is not going to be there for quite a long time to come; it will be for a couple of months.

SHRI K. D. MALAVIYA: Sir, while I fully agree with the Minister in his approach and I fully support and appreciate the steps that have been taken to divert from one product to another, I do request you to consider that some time might be allotted for the discussion of the distribution and production of petroleum products, apart from the discussion that has been decided upon about the price rise in essential commodities. If you set apart a separate time for this, perhaps it will be doing justice to this House.

MR. SPEAKER: I think so, but it all depends upon you all.

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: In fact, I myself was thinking that a discussion on this subject will enable us to elucidate a lot of facts. But I only want your indulgence to point out to Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu. I have to reply to the question that he raised—that so far as the kerosene supply in West Bengal is concerned, in 1972—January, February and March—76,111.

MR. SPEAKER: I thought you were replying to Mr. Malaviya, because Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu's question was over.

श्री मधु लिमये : क्या मन्त्री महोदय इस सभा को बतलायेंगे कि पिछले तीन महीनों में उन्होंने विभिन्न राज्यों को कितना कैरोसीन का कोटा दिया है तथा जो बहस आप दामों के बारे में करना चाहते हैं, उस के लिये यह भी जरूरी है कि चीनी का कितना कोटा किन राज्यों को दिया गया है यह सारी जानकारी सदन के सामने आनी चाहिये। बिहार में, जिसके आप राज्यपाल रह चुके हैं, डेढ़ रुपया बोनल कैरोसीन बिक रहा है इसलिये क्या यह जानकारी आप देंगे ?

श्री देवकान्त बरुआ : मेरे पास वेस्ट बंगाल और बिहार के फिगरम मौजूद हैं . . .

श्री मधु लिमये : सभी राज्यों के दीजिये।

श्री देवकान्त बरुआ : मत्र राज्यों के फिगरस इस समय मेरे पास मौजूद नहीं हैं, लेकिन बिहार के बारे में है . . .

अध्यक्ष महोदय : जब वह कहने हैं कि उन्होंने

सिर्फ बिहार के बारे में नहीं पूछा है तो आप जबरदस्ती क्यों देते हैं।

श्री देवकान्त बरुआ : उन्होंने बिहार के बारे में खास तौर से पूछा था—ये फिगरस इस प्रकार हैं:—

1972 January—15,274.

1972 February—12,851.

1972 March—12,948.

1973 January—18,997.

1973 February—11,669.

1973 March—12,086.

For May last year the figure is not available; for this year it is 10,872 tonnes.

श्री भागवत झा भ्राजाद : घटता जा रहा है।

श्री देवकान्त बरुआ : पहले 10 परसेंट कट था, फिर 20 परसेंट हुआ, मैंने जो फिगरस हैं वह बता दी हैं।

SHRI RAJA KULKARNI: About kerosene shortage it is necessary that the hon. Minister clarifies the position. To what extent is the shortage due to less imports of crude and to what extent the dealers are exploiting the shortage which is creating more difficulties to the citizen?

SHRI D. K. BOROOAH: There is shortage of crude and we are trying to get a minimum of a million tonnes. We have instructed all the State Governments; we have sent a message to all the oil companies and IOC that they must produce more and distribution must be done judiciously of these products.

श्री हुसम चन्द कछुबाय : अध्यक्ष महोदय, माननीय मन्त्री जी ने मूल प्रश्नों के उत्तर में बताया था कि देश के अनेक भागों से ऐी शिकायतें मिल रही हैं कि तेल की कमी है—क्या उन्होंने इस बात की छानबीन की है कि जो तेल आज मिल रहा है उस की कमी इस लिये भी दिखाई देती है कि लोग अधिक मुनाफा कमाना चाहते हैं। आज से तीन साल पहले तेल का भाव 40 पैसे लीटर था, 1971 में 50 पैसे लिटर हुआ और 1972 में 60 पैसे लिटर हो गया और आज डेढ़ रुपया लिटर मिलता है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि ये जो भाव बढ़े हैं क्या ये आप की पालिसी के अनुसार बढ़े हैं या आप ने दाम की कोई सीमा निर्धारित की है ? यदि नहीं की है तो दाम

सीमित करने के लिये आप क्या उपाय कर रहे हैं ? मिट्टी का तेल आम तौर पर गरीब लोग इस्तेमाल करते हैं, वह उन्हें उचित दामों पर मिले—इस के लिये आप कौन सी व्यवस्था करने जा रहे हैं ? क्या आपको यह भी पता है कि देहातों में जो पेट्रोल पम्प हैं, वे बहुत बड़ी मात्रा में पेट्रोल में मिट्टी का तेल मिला रहे हैं, क्या ऐसी शिकायतें आप को बड़ी मात्रा में मिली हैं ? मंने भी इस के बारे में आप को लिख कर दिया है—क्या इस सम्बन्ध में जांच करवा रहे हैं ?

**श्री बेबकान्त बरुआ :** इन का प्रश्न काफी लम्बा है— हम ने दाम नहीं बढ़ाया है, जो लोग चार बाजारी करते हैं, उन्होंने दाम बढ़ाया है। इस के लिये स्टेट गवर्नमेंट जिम्मेदार है, उन को अधिकार है, वह इस सम्बन्ध में कार्य-वाही करें, हम ने भी उन को कह दिया है। दूसरी बात—यह सही है कि जहाँ बिजली नहीं है, वहाँ तो इसी से लाइट हांती है— इस के लिये कुछ करना होगा। लेकिन मजबूरी के कारण जो कमी हुई है, उस को पूरा करने के लिये आइन्दा दो महीनों में हम कोशिश करेंगे। तीसरी बात—पेट्रोल में कैरोसीन मिलाते हैं—मैं समझता हूँ कि कार-आनर्स ऐसा कर के अपनी कार को खराब नहीं करना चाहेंगे। लेकिन यह बात सही है कि डीजल में कैरोसीन इस्तेमाल किया जाता है ऐसी शिकायतें हैं, उस के लिये प्रबन्ध करना चाहिये। हम इस के लिये बड़ी तेजी से विचार कर रहे हैं।

**श्री तुल्य चन्द कछुबाय :** उचित दामों पर तेल मिले इस के लिए क्या व्यवस्था करने जा रहे हैं।

**अध्यक्ष महोदय :** पहले ही सवाल बहुत लम्बा था, अब इस में धीर जोड़ते जा रहे हैं।

**SHRI K. LAKKAPPA:** Apart from the shortage, the necessities of life have been completely paralysed due to the shortage of kerosene oil. So far, millions of people are using it. But, this scarcity has been purposely created by certain dealers in various States. No action has been taken against the dealers who are indulging in adulteration of cement, petrol and diesel. On the contrary, the same dealers have been given licences. I want to know from the Government as to what action has been taken by them in re-

gard to the fair distribution. What is the action proposed to be taken by Government for creating this artificial scarcity by the dealers?

**श्री के०डी० मालवीय :** मुझे आशा है कि हमारी प्रार्थना स्वीकार कर ली गई है इस पर बहस के लिये अलग से कोई समय निर्धारित होगा।

**अध्यक्ष महोदय :** मैं अभी कुछ नहीं कह सकता—विजनेस एडवाइजरी कमेटी में बात होगी।

**श्रीके०डी० मालवीय :** लेकिन हम तो आ से अनुरोध कर सकते हैं।

**MR. SPEAKER:** You better ask the Minister to find time for the discussion.

**SHRI K. D. MALAVIYA:** I can ask him only through you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Your request, I am conveying through me to the Minister to find time. Mr. Lakkappa, will you kindly sit down? Or do you want to reply it yourself?

**SHRI D. K. BOROOAH:** There is a reduction in production of kerosene according to the policy laid down by the Government. But, Sir, the reduction he mentions is at the lower level—at the level of distributors. We have asked the oil companies to see that the distribution is done equitably. We have also advised the State Governments to take stringent measures which, they are authorised under the law.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Now, Mr. Piloo Mody will be the last but, not the least.

**SHRI PILOO MODY:** I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is or there is no excess production capacity in the country for the petroleum products. If there is an excess production capacity in the country, why the Government, in view of the fact that the shortage was apparent or has been apparent for some time, has not made a strenuous effort, if necessary, to have the necessary crude so that these companies could work in full capacity and provide the goods that the people demand?

**SHRI D. K. BOROOAH:** There is a shortage of petroleum products in this country and this has been there for quite some time. It is also a fact that crude is very difficult to obtain. The price of crude has gone up considerably. The price was Rs. 128 per barrel. Yesterday a message came from Saudi Arabia stating that the crude is available only at Rs. 265 per barrel.

It is a question of availability of crude. We are buying 1 million tonnes at fairly high price. We will convert it into diesel and kerosene upto 48 per cent, which is the production pattern. We are going to utilise it in the excess capacity available in this refinery.