

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Export of Sugar

*808. SHRI MOHINDER SINGH GILL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the people connected with the sugar industry in the country have urged upon Government to utilise the fruits of all-time high production of sugar by booking export orders right now;

(b) whether in this context Government are considering the question of setting up a high powered inter-ministerial committee to take on-the-spot decision in the matter; and

(c) if so, the steps that have been taken to ensure better utilisation of the production than last year?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (PROF. D. P. CHATTOPADHYAYA).

(a) Yes, Sir. There have been representations for increasing exports in view of higher level of production attained in 1974-75 season

(b) Export of sugar is entrusted to STC which is taking expeditious action for export of sugar from the new crop.

(c) All efforts are being made for exporting the available surplus of sugar this year.

श्री महेंद्र सिंह गिल : क्या मंत्री महोदय यह बताएंगे कि लास्ट डयर 5.5 लाख टन शुगर एक्सपोर्ट की गई थी और 1974-75 में कितनी मिकदार में, कितनी मात्रा में यह एक्सपोर्ट की जाएगी और पर क्वीटल किस रेट पर यह फारेन कन्ट्रीज को भेजी जाएगी ?

PROF. D. P. CHATTOPADHYAYA: In the year 1974-75, the total quantity of sugar exported by the S.T.C. is 6.26 lakh tonnes and it fetched Rs. 316 crores.

Sir, this year, we have not decided any fixed target, because it depends

upon what will be the quantity of surplus after domestic consumption. Although because of the fact that production has been better than last year, we hope, we will be able to export more. In order to earn more foreign exchange, it might be possible to deny ourselves a little more sugar and export more. The price will depend on various factors, such as, total production elsewhere, prospecting of the wheat crop elsewhere and other factors. But it will be less than what we could have last year.

श्री महेंद्र सिंह गिल : पिछले साल किस रेट पर चीनी बेची गई थी ?

PROF. D. P. CHATTOPADHYAYA: Last year, there was no uniform price throughout the year. Sometimes, we sold, say, at 292 pounds per tonne; then, in some cases, it was sold at 316 pounds; in some other cases, it was sold at 350 pounds. So, it depended upon so many factors from time to time

SHRI PROBODH CHANDRA: May I know from the Government if there is a concerted action or efforts on the part of importing countries to pay us less than what the market price is in those countries.

PROF. D. P. CHATTOPADHYAYA: The price that we fetched is consistent with the world price as indicated by the London Daily price quoted on that particular date.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: He has asked a different question. His question is whether there is a concerted action on the part of the importing countries to quote less price. That is the question which he has asked.

PROF. D. P. CHATTOPADHYAYA: I have answered it this way. I do not know; we are not aware of the concerted action. But even the prices we got indicate that if there was such an effort, it was not successful. We could fetch the highest possible price.

SHRI PROBODH CHANDRA: Is it not a fact that we got lesser price than what the other exporting countries got in the international market?

SHRI H. M. PATEL: Is it not a fact that the prices are coming down very steeply and, therefore, the margin of profit that you may have by exporting would be less. You may have to subsidise. Are you prepared for that?

PROF. D. P. CHATTOPADHYAYA: As I have already said, the price this time will be less than last year. The question of subsidy does not arise. It is not that bad as yet.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: Is it not a steep fall?

PROF. D. P. CHATTOPADHYAYA: It is relatively a small fall. I do not call it a steep fall.

SHRI B. V. NAIK: I want to know whether the gain which we are getting out of export of sugar would be more than offset by the import of our foodgrains? Whether the Commerce Ministry in its enthusiasm to earn export earnings is forgetting that what we gain by exporting sugar is lost by the import of foodgrains, and this sugarcane has been grown so much that the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Mr. Chavan wants to substitute cereal for sugar. Therefore, will there be a sort of parity maintained in regard to import of our cereal vis-à-vis export of sugar. In other words, are we promoting the production of cereal as against the production of sugarcane?

PROF. D. P. CHATTOPADHYAYA: As I have said, we have exported Rs. 316 crores worth of sugar through S.T.C. and Rs. 21 crores worth of sugar through Agriculture Ministry. But as our food requirements were higher, we had to pay a higher amount for that. About the question of parity, we might intend that but that may not be possible

because of inequality in the quantum of requirement of import of food.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Will the hon. Minister kindly tell us which countries were the principal purchasers of sugar last time; and what were the quantities in terms of value of the exports to the leading countries which purchased sugar?

PROF. D. P. CHATTOPADHYAYA: Among the countries which purchase our sugar are, Iran, Sudan, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Morocco, Egypt, Eden, Jordan, Yaman, F.R.G. and Maldiva. Iran purchased the highest quantity; next Sudan and thereafter, Indonesia.

Alleged Racket in Central Bank of India, Calcutta

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*811. **SHRI SAKTI KUMAR SARKAR:**

SHRI M. KATHAMUTHU:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an agent and some other employees of the Central Bank of India, Calcutta have been suspended following the detection of a racket involving nearly Rs 51 lakhs; and

(b) if so, the facts thereof and further action being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM): (a) and (b). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) and (b). Central Bank of India has reported that, during the internal audit of the Barbourne Road branch in February—May, 1974, it came to the notice of the internal auditors that during the years 1973-74, certain firms dealing in chemicals and dyes in Calcutta allegedly defrauded the bank. The bank had the matter further investigated by deputing a senior officer from the Inspection Department of its Central Office. Some possible collusion between certain employees of the bank and the