

LOK SABHA DEBATES

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LOK SABHA

Friday, August 13, 1976/Sravana 22,
1898 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Share of Sugar in Exports

*61. SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY:
Will the Minister of COMMERCE be
pleased to state:

(a) whether our exports increased
by 18 per cent in 1975-76; and

(b) if so, what is the share of sugar
exports in total exports?

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

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 11.98 per cent during 1975-76.

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: I
congratulate the Minister on the excel-
lent export performance. May I
know whether the same trend of ex-
ports will continue during this year
also and if not, why not?

PROF. D. P. CHATTOPADHYAYA:
Last year our export of sugar has been
an all-time high. Production was near-
ly 47.97 lakh tonnes. The carry-over
from the previous year was 8.78 lakh
tonnes. Total availability was 56.75
lakh tonnes. Domestic Consumption
was 34.57 lakh tonnes. The rest was
1248 LS—1

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for export and carry-over. The pro-
duction this year would be somewhat
less. Depending on the demand of the
home market and availability, we will
think of finalising the export target.

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: We
have built up the foreign markets after
a great deal of effort. If one year we
export and next year we reduce it, are
we not going to lose our market? What
is the remedy? What is the reason
for fall in production when there has
been plenty of rains, plenty of fertili-
sers and credit facilities also?

PROF. D. P. CHATTOPADHYAYA:
We have two markets—internal and
foreign. We have to take care of the
genuine demands of both the markets,
perhaps more so of the home market.
I very much appreciate the point made
by the hon. Member that we should
try our best to retain the foreign mar-
ket acquired by us in the last two
years. But that objective should be
consistent with the demand of the in-
ternal market. We cannot afford to see
the price of sugar—an essential com-
modity—in the internal market going
up high beyond the reach of the ordi-
nary man. The total availability of
sweeteners—Sugar, khandsari and gur
taken together—has not gone down.
The production of sugar has gone
down somewhat. Steps are being
taken to balance the production, tak-
ing all the factors into consideration.

SHRI PRABODH CHANDRA: Is it a
fact that we are getting a lower price
for sugar than what is prevalent in the
international market?

PROF. D. P. CHATTOPADHYAYA:
That is not a fact. We have got from
the international market comparable
to what the other exporters have got.

The average price realisation last year was Rs. 3,900 per metric tonne FOB. It was quite favourable, comparable to what was realised by the exporting countries.

SHRI NARASINGH NARAIN PANDEY: Will the hon. Minister throw some light on this? While the home consumption last year was 37 lakh tonnes, this year it is only 34.76 lakh tonnes. Yet, the export commitment was also not honoured up to the mark.

PROF. D. P. CHATTOPADHYAYA: We have to take care of the demand of the home market and also avoid a possible shortage or price rise. If it will cause hardship to the domestic consumers we will not export. Consistent with the level of our production, our export performance quantitywise was not unreasonable and unjustified.

MR. SPEAKER: Next question. Shri Indrajit Gupta.

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE. Sir, you can take up Question No 71 which is on the same subject. Perhaps you can take up 79 also

MR. SPEAKER: Yes you can do all of them together. The only point is that you would be repeating what you said yesterday

PROF. D. P. CHATTOPADHYAYA Sir, I share your fears

Support price for Raw Jute

*62 **SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA** Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state

(a) on what basis Government have fixed the support price for raw jute in the current season at Rs 135 per quintal;

(b) whether the West Bengal Government has demanded a minimum support price of Rs. 180 per quintal,

(c) whether the purchasing target of the Jute Corporation of India has been fixed at only 8 lakhs bales this year; and

(d) if so, how any minimum rice can be ensured in respect of the balance of the crop?

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

(a) Statutory minimum price for raw jute in the current season was fixed after considering the recommendations of the Agricultural Prices Commission.

(b) There have been representations for an increase in the statutory minimum price for raw jute.

(c) and (d). The Board of Jute Corporation of India decided on 31-5-1976, on a plan of purchase of 8 lakh bales for 1976-77. However, the Jute Corporation of India has been advised to increase its plan of operations beyond 8 lakh bales to ensure at least statutory minimum price for the growers.

Cut in production by West Bengal Jute mill owners

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*71 **SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE:**
SHRI MOHAMMAD ISMAIL:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state.

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the fact that the West Bengal jute mill owners are cutting production even more than what was permitted, and

(b) if so, what action has been taken against jute mill owners?

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

(a) and (b). Production regulation in respect of Carpet Backing and Hessian stipulated only the maximum permissible level of production. The said production regulation in respect of Carpet Backing and Hessian has been withdrawn with effect from 14th July, 1976.