

LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Monday, August 30, 1976/Bhadra 8,
1898 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock

[MR SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Establishment of Public Warehousing Corporations

*262 DR RANEN SEN

SHRIMATI PARVATHI
KRISHNAN

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE
AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state

(a) what steps Government have
taken to establish Public Warehousing
Corporations to hold stocks for the
farmers, and

(b) whether Central Government
have directed States to treat this issue
on priority basis?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN
THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
AND IRRIGATION (SHRI ANNA-
SAHEB P SHINDE) (a) and (b) A
statement is laid on the Table of the
Sabha

STATEMENT

Under the provisions of the Ware-
housing Corporations Act 1962 a
Central Warehousing Corporation and
16 State Warehousing Corporations

1690 LS—1

have been set up. These Warehousing
Corporations acquire and build go-
downs/warehouses at suitable places
and run them for storage of agricul-
tural produce, seeds, manure, fertili-
sers, agricultural implements and no-
tified commodities offered by indivi-
duals, co-operative societies and other
institutions. The warehouses are utilis-
ed by various depositors including
farmers.

2 In the present context of the
need to have additional storage space,
concerted efforts are being made by
the Central and State Governments
to increase the storage capacity.

DR RANEN SEN Sir, in this
statement it is stated that a Central
Warehousing Corporation and sixteen
State Warehousing Corporations have
been set up. It is known that nearly
five million tonnes of foodgrains are
wasted annually in our country due
to various reasons. Foodgrains and
other crops are produced in lakhs of
villages in this country. What is the
function of the State Warehousing
Corporation? How do they propose
to manage that? Or has any State be-
gun to manage them in huge number
of villages?

SHRI ANNASHEB P SHINDE
First of all one should be very clear
because there are three types of or-
ganisation—one is the Central Ware-
housing Corporation, the second tier
is the State Warehousing Corporation
and the third is the co-operative mar-
keting organisation. They should pro-
vide storage facility at the village and
taluka levels.

As far as the functions are concern-
ed the Central Warehousing Corpo-
ration has a very clearly earmarked

function of locating the storages at the places of all-India importance—from the point of view of communication, from the point of view of providing food and other commodities; the States Warehousing Corporation are supposed to provide warehousing facilities at district level and also at places of importance from the State angle. The cooperatives are supposed to provide storage facilities at the village and taluk levels. This is a broad division for establishment of storage facilities.

DR. RANEN SEN: In our villages—I do not know whether presently in villages of other States there is such a system—there is a system of grain-gods where peasants keep their stocks—only the village surpluses are stored here. There is a newspaper report about the proposal and Mr. Agarwal has made a statement that bins will be provided to the farmers. But, the statement made by the Minister is something quite different from the statement made by Shri Agarwal in regard to providing bins to the villagers where they can keep their foodgrains cereals and other things.

SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE. Naturally, the statement is with reference to the question put and not with reference to what Mr. Agarwal or somebody else said in public. Therefore, I have tried to reply to the question that has been put to me. As far as the point raised by the hon. Member is concerned, it is the policy of the Government of India that storage bins must be provided to farmers. They should be moisture proof. There are now manufacturers both in the private sector as well as in public sector. The Government of India has now taken up the matter with the Reserve Bank that the bank credit should be made available to the farmers. We have a policy for this purpose. It is a question of implementation of it. I appreciate the hon. Member's concern that we have

still to go far enough to really cover very large areas in this country.

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN: Sir, in view of the bumper crop we have and in view of the targets that are there before us, the Minister has only stated about the machinery that he has. Even there it seems to be a supposition because he said that they are supposed to do. I would like to know exactly in what manner these warehousing Corporations are going to provide storage facilities to the farmers. Even the reply does not relate only to foodgrains. What about the other crops such as cotton, groundnut etc. What is being visualised in this set up of the warehousing corporations to give these small farmers and the rural population the facilities so that they can store their things there. The storage is a biggest problem and sometimes they sell the crops at distress prices because they do not have these facilities. Is that the conception that is there or is a plan worked out for it or is it still in the air of supposition. This is what I would like to know from

him

SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE: I am very sorry that the hon. Member has misunderstood me. The Government's policy is very clear. Of late we have not been encouraging holding of stocks by the farmers. This is being done deliberately to check inflation, etc. What we are going is to encourage the public sector organisations to make purchases and this facility which is being provided by the warehousing corporations is being mostly utilised by the public sector undertakings. Eighty one per cent of the capacity being made available by these corporations is utilising by the Government sponsored agencies. For the time being the emphasis is more on this aspect but when our production increases further, we shall have to strengthen the arrangements at the farmers' level.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA MALDER: I want to know the total storage capacity and this total agricultural produce. What percentage of the total produce is covered by the warehousing corporations storage capacity which is already in existence? Secondly, what percentage would be covered by the year 1978?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE: There is a total storage capacity of 19.8 million tonnes available with these three agencies, namely, FCI, Central Warehousing Corporation and State Warehousing Corporations. This is excluding cooperatives.

SHRI JAGANNATH RAO: Sir, the problems of plenty have arisen in our country following the bumper crop that we had last year. In Koraput district of Orissa there is a bumper rice crop and the tribal peasants take their paddy to the weekly market because the FCI has not enough storage capacity and these tribal peasants are forced to sell their paddy at distress price. May I know whether the Central Government has issued any directions to the State Government to see that they increase the storage capacity?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE: We have taken up this matter with the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission has placed Rs 40 crores at our disposal for this purpose for the next years in addition to Rs. 20 crores made available for this year. We hope there will be additional storage capacity to the extent of one to one and a half millions tonnes yearly with these agencies.

श्री बिभूति मिश्र : अध्यक्ष महोदय, दो तरह का गल्ला पैदा होता है। एक तो वह है जिसको इस वर्ष तक रखे रहे तो नुकसान नहीं होता जैसे धान है चाहे उरु का चावन बना दीजिए और दूसरा गेहूँ, जना, मक्का

चादि है जिसे रख कर निकट को उरु में धान बन जाता है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि स्टेट वार्हाउस जो धरने लाहता बना रही है उरु में साइंटिफिक तरीके से इस खादों को रखने के लिए उसने कोई कार्यवाही बनाया है कि कितने दिनों तक यह गल्ला रखा जायस तो इस में खराबी नहीं होगी ? उसी तरह से स्टेट वार्नमेन्ट और को-ऑपरेटिव सोसाइटीज को कोई डायरेक्शन दिया है कि किस ढंग से गल्ला रखने का इंतजाम करें और क्या वह सही है कि बिभिन्न राज्यों ने जो गल्ला रखा है वह नुकसान ज्यादा हुआ है ? कृषि मंत्री जो ने बराबर यह कहा है कि सरकार पूरा गल्ला खरीदेगी तो मैं आप को बताना चाहता हूँ कि पिछले हॉ साल बिहार सरकार ने मैं खरीदने में असमर्थता जाहिर की और मंत्री जी ने भी बिहार सरकार को लिखा। प्रश्न यह है कि क्या केन्द्रीय सरकार, स्टेट वार्नमेन्ट और को-ऑपरेटिव के पास बल्ले को साइंटिफिक ढंग से रखने की ताकत है या नहीं।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : माननीय सदस्य जानना चाहते हैं कि क्या आप ने गल्ले को साइंटिफिक ढंग से रखने के लिए कोई डाक्रेक्टिव दिया है।

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE: It is not a question of directive. We request the State Government. I appreciate the concern felt by the hon. member. In fact, during the last one decade, one major development in this sphere has been in regard to storage facilities. We are trying to develop modern storage facilities which are rodent-proof, damp-proof, moisture-proof etc. Though the total quantity of space available is inadequate to our requirements, we have created very large storage facilities all over the country. The losses so far have been, by and large, less than one per cent, though I cannot say what would be the current position.