

SHRI K. R. GANESH: There is a proposal before Government to increase the production. Sheep-breeding has been improved and the quantity of wool produced has increased.

(a) whether the State Government of Kerala have made a request to the Prime Minister for fixation of prices of essential commodities; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

Loans provided to Adivasi Areas in Orissa under concessional rate of interest

*365. SHRI C. M. SINHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of financial assistance provided by the Central Government to the Adivasi areas in the State of Orissa under the scheme of concession rate of interest for certain categories of borrowers started by Public Sector Banks; and

(b) the number of persons benefited thereunder during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YESHWANTRAO CHAVAN):

(a) and (b). Public sector banks have completed identification of the branches where the scheme of Differential Rate of Interest is to be implemented and have commenced lending under the Scheme only recently. Reports received so far indicate that in Orissa State 26 branches have been selected and of these 16 are in tribal districts. Details of the total amount disbursed under the scheme as well as the number of persons benefited in Orissa State are not yet available. In this connection it may be mentioned that the banks do not maintain statistics separately for Adivasis, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes on the one hand and the other borrowers on the other.

Request made by Kerala Government for fixation of prices of essential commodities

*367. SHRIMATI BHARGAVI THANKAPPAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YESHWANTRAO CHAVAN):

(a) The Government of Kerala have made a request for the public distribution of essential commodities like foodgrains, pulses, sugar, cloth, edible oils etc. at fixed prices through fair price shops.

(b) There is already a network of fair price shops distributing wheat and rice at fixed prices. Levy sugar is also being distributed through fair price shops. In certain States a limited quantity of edible oil and pulses is being distributed through fair price shops. A decision has also been taken to sell the entire production of controlled cloth through fair price shops approved by the State Governments, Super Bazars, Fair Price Shops affiliated to the National Co-operative Consumers Federation and mills' retail shops.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: What has it got to do with his Ministry, Sir? I think it has nothing to do with his Ministry. Is his Ministry a Ministry of 'shock absorbers'?

SHRIMATI BHARGAVI THANKAPPAN: Will the Minister consider increase of fair price shops in Kerala?

SHRI YESHWANTRAO CHAVAN: I am sorry I won't be able to give the figure of fair-price shops in Kerala. For the entire area I do not have the figure with me. Kerala State is one of the States where there is a very good organisation of the fair-price shops. And, it is because of this, that the Chief Minister has pointed out that if there is supply of essential commodities they can make a better distribution.

SHRIMATI BHARGAVI THANK-APPAN: How many other States have approached the Central Government with this request for the same facilities? Has any assurance been given by the Central Government in that regard?

SHRI YESHWANTRAO CHAVAN: Most of the States are asking for the same facilities.

SHRI N. SREEKANTAN NAIR: Kerala is one State which is most deficit in foodgrains. Will Government consider giving special consideration to the request of the Chief Minister of Kerala?

SHRI YESHWANTRAO CHAVAN: Every Chief Minister's request will have to be considered in this matter. Because, this year is not a normal year. Even the so-called surplus States have because of drought condition, become deficit States. So the normal criteria of deficit States and non-deficit States will be rather unrealistic now. But, naturally, Kerala has a problem. It is one of the States which has a deficit every year.

सवाल किशोर सिन्हा : हमारे देश में कितनी फेयर प्राइस शोप्स हैं ?

SHRI YESHWANTRAO CHAVAN: It is one lakh and odd .

अध्यक्ष महोदय : मौजूदा सवाल तो महज केरल बर्नमेंट द्वारा सेंटर को पब्लिक डिस्ट्रिब्यूशन एसोसियल कमाडिटीज के करने की रिक्वेस्ट तक महबूद है ।

SHRI R. BALAKRISHNA PILLAI: Sugar price in Kerala is very high compared to other parts in the country. Will the Government allot more levy sugar for distribution through

fair-price shops as it is already done there?

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: How does it arise? How can the Finance Minister reply in regard to supply of sugar in Kerala? It is to be answered by some other Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: The question refers to fixation of prices of essential commodities.

AN HON. MEMBER. Sugar is an essential commodity

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : चीनी के के बारे में पूछा जा सकता है । क्या चीनी में एक्साइज ड्यूटी कम करने का विचार है इस का वित्त मंत्री जी जवाब दे सकते हैं ।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : अब इस तरह से मिना मिना शुरू हो जायेगा तो बंद करना मुश्किल हो जायगा । अलबत्ता Only with respect to Kerala. जवाब दे दें ।

SHRI YESHWANTRAO CHAVAN: That I will certainly answer. The levy sugar arrangement came with effect from 1st October, throughout the country. The retail price of Rs. 2 per kg. would be increased by 20 paise after taking into account the increasing cost of sugarcane etc. However, partly this increase is neutralised by the reduction in rate of excise duty from 30 per cent to 26 per cent, and the retail price effective for the new season would be somewhat less.

SHRI R. BALAKRISHNA PILLAI: My question was this. Open market price in Kerala for one k.g. of sugar is nearly Rs. 4.50. Considering this fact, will Government also more sugar for distribution through fair-price shops?

AN HON. MEMBER: Same is the case with Maharashtra also.

SHRI YESHWANTRAO CHAVAN: As far as levy sugar is concerned, it is sold through public distribution agencies. So far as allocation is concerned I am sure the Agriculture Minister will take into consideration the requirements and the population of the area.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: How is the Finance Minister concerned with this question? I hope you would not mind questions on Income-tax being answered by the Food Minister!

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA: The Finance Minister is ably replying to this question, although it does not fall exactly within his jurisdiction. What are the articles that are considered essential for which fair-price shops are asked to be opened in Kerala?

SHRI YESHWANTRAO CHAVAN: Normally the essential articles, which the Chief Minister had also mentioned, are, cloth, food, particularly wheat and rice, and kerosene oil. To some extent, drugs also. So many other things can be considered as essential commodities, but these were some of the commodities which he had mentioned.

Disparity in the Pay Scales and conditions of service of the two classes of Income-tax Officers

*370. **SHRI PHOOL CHAND VERMA:** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are two Classes of Income-tax Officers performing the same type of work bearing equal responsibilities; and

(b) if so, the reasons for disparity in pay scales and service conditions of the two classes of Income-tax Officers and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI K. R. GANESH): (a) There are two classes of Income Tax Officers namely, Income Tax Officers Class I and Income Tax Officers Class II. The statutory duties and responsibilities of both are similar inasmuch as they derive their powers from the Income Tax Act, equally.

(b) Several Committees and Commissions *viz.*, First Pay Commission, Direct Taxes Administration Enquiry Committee of 1958-59, the Second Pay Commission, Administrative Reforms Commission and Direct Taxes Enquiry Committee (Wanchoo Committee) have expressed views about the existence of two classes. Government would take a final decision about the existence of two separate classes after the report of the Third Pay Commission has been received.

श्री फूलचन्द वर्मा : अध्यक्ष महोदय , अप्रैल, 1968 में लोक लेखा समिति ने यह सिफारिश की थी कि इनकम टैक्स आफिसर्स का क्लास 2 का केडर समाप्त कर दिया जाये, लेकिन अभी तक यह केडर समाप्त नहीं हुआ है । मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या यह लोक लेखा समिति की उपेक्षा नहीं है । यदि यह लोक लेखा समिति के प्रतिवेदन की उपेक्षा है तो जिन अधिकारियों ने इस की उपेक्षा की है उन के खिलाफ मंत्री महोदय ने क्या कार्यवाई की है ?

दूसरी बात मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या यह सत्य है कि प्रशासनिक सुधार आयोग के वर्किंग ग्रुप ने वित्त विभाग के उच्च अधिकारियों को प्रथम और द्वितीय वेतन आयोग के समक्ष भ्रामक शब्दों का उपयोग करने का दोषी ठहराया था ? क्या