

**Shri Thirumala Rao:** What is the difficulty in answering my question?

**Shri D. N. Tiwary:** If it concerns the Food Ministry, he may collect the information and supply it to us during the next session.

**Mr. Speaker:** That may be done.

**Shri Shasi Ranjan:** An important question like this should not have been neglected in this manner.

### Prices of Essential Commodities

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- \*291. **Shri S. C. Samanta:**  
**Shri C. C. Desai:**  
**Shri Chintamani Panigrahi:**  
**Shri M. Sudarsanam:**  
**Shri C. Janardhanan:**  
**Shri Ramachandra Ulaka:**  
**Shri Dhuleshwar Meena:**  
**Shri Khagapathi Pradhani:**  
**Shri Hirji Bhai:**  
**Dr. Mahadeva Prasad:**  
**Shri R. Barua:**  
**Shri M. N. Naghnoor:**  
**Shri D. C. Sharma:**

Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been a steady increase in the prices of essential commodities throughout the country during the last three months;

(b) if not, the States in which the prices have fallen; and

(c) whether Government have taken any concrete measures to stabilise the prices of essential commodities in the country?

**The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, (Shri Morarji Desai):** (a) and (b). Wholesale prices of essential commodities have generally increased during the past three months. At certain centres prices of a few commodities have, however, declined and a statement showing the commodities and the centres where a fall in prices has been reported is laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in the Library. See No. LT-265/67].

(c) Measures taken by the Government to contain the prices of essential commodities include, among others, subsidy on foodgrains, fertilisers and petroleum products, liberalisation of imports to stimulate production, expansion of the network of consumers cooperatives opening of departmental stores in major cities and the appointment of the Civil Supplies Commissioner to take corrective action in regard to essential commodities as and when necessary. Government has also stressed the need for fiscal and monetary restraint to check the pressure of demand.

श्री एस० सी० सामन्ता : अयावश्यक वस्तुओं के मूल्य बढ़ने के क्या क्या मुख्य कारण हैं और उनको कम करने के लिए क्या क्या कदम उठाये गये हैं ?

**Shri Morarji Desai:** I have not followed the question.

**Mr. Speaker:** He may translate it into English.

**Shri S. C. Samanta:** What are the reasons for the increase in the prices of essential goods and what steps have been taken to check it?

**Shri Morarji Desai:** I have already stated what steps have been taken. The causes for rise are mainly the rise in food prices and the prices of agricultural produce because of scarcity and drought for two years. There may be other causes also, I would not say that there are no other causes, but the immediate causes are these. The best remedy is to increase production for which also action is being taken. As regards the other steps taken, I have indicated them in my reply.

श्री एस० सी० सामन्ता : उत्पादन मूल्य तय करने के लिए फूडग्रेज इन्क्वायरी कमेटी ने कोई सुझाव दिया था और नहीं दिया था तो एग्रिकल्चरल रायल कमिशन की तरह कोई कमेटी बिठाने की गवर्नमेंट की तजवीज है ?

श्री मोरारजी देसाई : फूडप्रॉज की प्रोडक्शन बढ़ाने के लिए कमेटी घिटाने का जहां तक सवाल है कमेटी बिटाने से तो वह बढ़ेगा नहीं। इसके लिए किसान की मदद करनी होगी और उसको धताना . . . .

**Shri S. C. Samanta:** I am talking of the cost of production.

श्री मोरारजी देसाई : कास्ट ग्राफ प्रोडक्शन घटाने के लिए हम सबको सहकार करना होगा। हम हर एक चीज की कीमत बढ़ायें लेकर की कीमत बढ़ायें लेकिन काम कम करें तब तो प्रोडक्शन की कीमत बढ़ती ही जाएगी। लेकिन प्रोडक्शन जो है वह ज्यादा हो यानी जितना प्रोडक्शन एक एकड़ में होता है वह ज्यादा बढ़े तब से कास्ट ग्राफ प्रोडक्शन भी घटेगा। इसीलिये उसकी और ज्यादा कदम उठाने के लिए एवर्नमेंट ने अनेक इलाज किए हैं। उसमें अच्छे सीड्स अच्छे इम्प्लैमेंट्स पानी का इंतजाम, खाद का इंतजाम शामिल हैं और इस सबके लिए रोज रोज ज्यादा कदम हम उठाते रहे हैं।

**Shri S. C. Samanta:** May I know whether any committee is going to be set up to fix the cost of production of all commodities?

**Shri Morarji Desai:** To fix the cost of production by a committee will not be a practical step. But to take steps to see that the cost of production is kept down is another matter. That has constantly to be inquired into and gone into and remedial steps taken.

**Shri Chintamani Panigrahi:** It was suggested by the Foodgrains Inquiry Committee that because of speculation in the foodgrains trade, prices are rising over which Government has no control. Therefore, it was suggested that greater social control over the wholesale trade in foodgrains must be enforced. Has Government done anything in this respect or does it propose to do anything in that direction?

**Shri Morarji Desai:** One method of tackling the question was the setting up the Food Corporation.

**Shri Chintamani Panigrahi rose—**

**Mr. Speaker:** He has answered it.

**Shri Chintamani Panigrahi:** He has not explained it. Notices had appeared in Calcutta papers for the auction of damaged foodgrains by the Food Corporation. What was the quantity damaged?

**Mr. Speaker:** How can the Finance Minister answer that?

**Shri Chintamani Panigrahi:** The extent of damage.

**Mr. Speaker:** No.

**Shri M. Sudarsanam:** What about giving some incentives for larger production?

**Shri Morarji Desai:** All steps are being considered, and if there are any suggestions in this direction, they will be welcome.

**Shri R Barua:** Apart from the question of low production excessive money supply and the utilisation of PL 480 rupee funds have got a direct bearing on the prices of essential commodities. Are Government considering measures to put a stop to these things at least partially?

**Shri Morarji Desai:** The question of excessive money supply is considered and the supply is curtailed as far as it is possible to do it. The question of PL 480 funds utilisation is also considered. Those funds are being utilised. They also add to injecting more funds; that is quite true. But we have got to get the PL 480 grains because we require them.

**Shri M. N. Naghnor:** Government were pleased to state that they have taken measures to open departmental and consumer stores. These institutions will serve only the urban requirements. Will Government take similar steps to cater to the needs of the rural areas?

**Shri Morarji Desai:** It is possible to open these co-operative stores, for Government, in urban areas. In rural areas, this should be done only through cooperative societies. If co-operative societies take them up, Government would certainly encourage them and help them

**Shri D. C. Sharma:** I am afraid the hon. Deputy Prime Minister has over simplified the question. The rise in prices of essential commodities is due not only to below-normal production but also due to the inflationary process we have set up on account of excessive government spending and also due to lack of control of hoarders, blackmarketeers and anti-social elements. Therefore, I would like to ask the hon. Deputy Prime Minister—I am very happy that he is Deputy Prime Minister—to give us a comprehensive answer as to what steps he is taking to curb the prices of essential commodities, because I find that the prices are going up and coming down and again going up. How does it happen? What is the mechanism which makes the prices rise so quickly and fall so quickly and again rise so quickly? Has the hon. Minister studied it?

**Shri Morarji Desai:** The factors given by the hon. Member for the rise of prices are there. I have no dispute with that, and whatever steps, Government can take, are being taken, and some of the steps taken are mentioned in the reply which I already read out.

**Shri D. C. Sharma:** What is the net result of those steps?

**Shri Morarji Desai:** Not yet very appreciable.

**श्री एल० एम० जोशी :** क्या वह दुस्त नहीं है कि फूडवेज का होलसेल ट्रेड ड्राइवट लोगों के हाथ में है उसके कारण और जो जोज बनाए गए हैं उसके कारण वे कीमतें बढ़ रही हैं?

**श्री मोरारजी देसाई :** वे कारण भी हो सकते हैं और इन सारी बातों के बारे में सब चीफ मिनिस्टर्स के साथ चर्चा होने वाली है।

**Shrimati Jyotsna Chanda:** Do the Government propose to constitute a high-power committee to go into the causes of the rise in prices and also to find out ways and means to control the prices?

**Shri Morarji Desai:** I do not know whether a committee can be useful for this purpose but is a suggestion which certainly will receive careful consideration.

**श्री श्री हुकूम खन्ड कल्लवाय :** क्या सरकार को इस बात की जानकारी है कि रेडियो से जो प्रत्यावश्यक वस्तुओं के मूल्यों की घोषणा की जाती है मार्केट में उस हिसाब से वे वस्तुएँ नहीं मिलती हैं यदि हाँ, तो क्या सरकार इसकी छानबीन कर उन लोगों के खिलाफ तुरन्त कार्यवाही करेगी, जो रेडियो से घोषित भावों पर वस्तुओं को नहीं बेचते हैं?

**श्री मोरारजी देसाई :** रेडियो से जो भाव कहे जाते हैं, बाजार में उन भावों पर चीजें नहीं मिलती हैं, इस बारे में अगर कोई शिकायत दी जाये, तो जरूर उसकी जांच की जायेगी और जो कदम उठाए जाने चाहिए, वे उठाए जायेंगे।

**श्री हुकूम खन्ड कल्लवाय :** शिकायत तो हम दे सकते हैं लेकिन क्या सरकार ने इस बारे में कोई खोज की है?

**श्री मोरारजी देसाई :** भेरे पास ऐसी कोई शिकायत नहीं आई है। मैं क्या करूँ?

**Shri Shivaji Rao S. Deshmukh:** Will the hon. Deputy Prime Minister be pleased to take the House into confidence as to what is the basis of Government's assumption that the rise in prices is primarily due to the rise in

the price of foodgrains and agricultural products, when consistently for years together studies and researches conducted by the market advisers of the Government of India are highlighting this point that the rise in prices of agricultural produce bears absolutely no relation to the rise in prices of other manufactured commodities, and in fact, the prices are much less while compared to them? How does he propose to reconcile the statement which he has laid on the Table of the House that there has been fall in prices of so many agricultural commodities not accompanied by a fall in the prices of manufactured articles?

**Shri Morarji Desai:** I stick to the statement that I have made in spite of what my hon. friend has said. It is obvious, it does not require anything more than common sense to know that when food prices increase, other prices also increase, and food prices increase because of scarcity. They have increased during the last three years and a half when we have got all these factors coming into force. Of course, injection of more money on account of the Plan and defence expenditure and other things are also responsible for it but all these factors can be countered by greater production. If there is greater production, then fall in prices will come. Then there is also a demand by friends like my hon. friend that prices should go on increasing for foodgrains all the while. That is also a reason for the increase in prices.

**Shri Shrivajirao S. Deshmakh:** The latter part of the question has not been answered. He himself has laid a statement before the House detailing the fall in prices of agricultural commodities which unrelated to the fall in the price of manufactured goods.

**Shri Morarji Desai:** These are temporary fluctuations and only in some places, not in all places. Some are seasonal.

**श्री सरजू पाण्डेय :** माननीय अध्यक्ष महोदय धनी माननीय मंत्री जी ने बताया है कि कच्चे की कमी है इससे दाम बढ़ रहे

हैं। लेकिन जहाँ जहाँ कांग्रेस विरोधी सरकारें बनी हैं वहाँ से समाचार मिल रहे हैं कि कच्चे के भाव गिर रहे हैं तो क्या माननीय मंत्री जी कोई ऐसा एफेक्टिव कदम उठावेंगे जिससे वे। घर में कच्चे का भाव गिरे क्योंकि जहाँ गैरकांग्रेसी सरकारें हैं वहाँ बढ़े हैं . . . . . (ध्वजवाण) . . . . . तो मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ कि उनकी तरफ से क्यों नहीं ऐसे कदम उठाये जाते जिसे पूरे देश में एक पालिसी हो और इसमें कच्चे की जो होड़िया हो रही है उसको भी चेक किया जा सके ?

**श्री मोरारजी देसाई :** सम्मानित सभासद ने जो कहा है कि नान-कांग्रेसी प्रदेशों में ही भाव घटे हैं वह बात सही नहीं है और हकीकत दूसरी है। हकीकत देखा जाय तो चावल की कीमत गिरी है गुजरात, मैसूर, उत्तर प्रदेश, वेस्ट बंगाल और हिमाचल प्रदेश में और 5 में से 3 कांग्रेसी प्रदेश हैं। दो ही नान-कांग्रेसी प्रदेश हैं। . . . . . (ध्वजवाण) . . . . . गेहूँ की प्राइस गिरी है गुजरात, महाराष्ट्र और केरल में। इनमें से दो कांग्रेसी प्रदेश हैं। कोकोनट प्राइस की प्राइस गिरी है आसाम, गुजरात, केरल मद्रास और वेस्ट बंगाल में। इनमें से दो प्रदेश कांग्रेसी हैं और तीन नान-कांग्रेसी हैं। इसीलिए जो बातें कही जाती हैं कि नान-कांग्रेसी सरकारें जहाँ हैं उहीं प्रदेशों में भाव घटे हैं कांग्रेसी प्रदेशों में नहीं घटे हैं इससे उलटी बात दूसरी कोई नहीं है . . . . . (ध्वजवाण) . . . . .

**श्री जगजिवाई जे० पटेल :** मैं माननीय मंत्री जी का ध्यान आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ कि लगातार 20 वर्षों से वस्तुओं के दाम बढ़ते जा रहे हैं तो क्या शासन की तरफ से ऐसी कोई चांच पड़ताल की व्यवस्था है जिससे यह पता चक सके

कि कौन कौन सी चीजों में कितने प्रतिशत घाव हर साल बढ़े हैं ?

जी श्रीरारजी देसाई : जो हकीमत है वह बताई जा चुकी है। मगर फिर से जानना चाहते हैं तो नोटिस देंगे तो फिर बता देंगे।

**Shri Hem Barua:** Whatever the hon. Deputy Prime Minister might say, the prices have reportedly come down particularly in the States with non-Congress Governments and the Congress States had only followed suit. That shows that the hoarders who had been basking so long in the sunshine of Congress patronage had played a redoubtable part in creating artificial scarcity conditions in the country. In the light of these facts, what steps is he going to take to see that the hoarders are not allowed to play a part in creating scarcity conditions in the country?

**Shri Morarji Desai:** May I say that the insinuation in the question is not correct.

**Mr. Speaker:** It is a repetition of the same question.

**Shri Morarji Desai:** His facts are not correct. He says that it first started in non-Congress States. It is not so. It was simultaneous in all the States. Therefore, it is not true to say that this was followed by them. I may even say that the non-Congress States followed the Congress States. That also would not be correct. I do not claim that either. My hon. friend does not give facts. I give the true facts which he does not take.

भारत बीरल एण्ड ड्रम मैनुफैक्चरिंग कम्पनी (प्राइवेट) लिमिटेड

\* 292. जी मधु लिमये : क्या पेट्रोलियम और रसायन मंत्री 9 नवम्बर 1966 के सारांकित प्रश्न संख्या 185 के उत्तर के सम्बन्ध में यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि इन्डियन प्रायम कारपोरेशन ने भारत बीरल एण्ड ड्रम मैनुफैक्चरिंग कम्पनी (प्राइवेट)

लिमिटेड को काली सूची में रखने के बारे में क्या कार्यवाही की है ?

**The Minister of State in the Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals and of Planning and Social Welfare (Shri Raghunath Ramiah):** The connected matters are still sub judice. Government will await court decisions before considering any further action. It may, however, be added that, although the Ministry following the agreement with the various undertakings passed orders in February 1966 that all those undertakings should follow the standardised code of procedure for blacklisting, until May 1966 orders were being placed on this blacklisted firm by the Indian Oil Corporation Limited. Some explanation is on record as to how this happened. But this requires further examination and that is being done.

जी मधु लिमये : सच्यत महोदय, इस फार्म के गैर कानूनी कार्यों के कारण इनको जनवरी 1964 में काली सूची में डाला गया। इसके पश्चात् करीब करीब सवा दो साल तक इसकी जानकारी इन्डियन प्रायम कारपोरेशन को नहीं दी गई थीर इस बीच में सवा दो साल की अवधि में इनको बराबर कोटे भी मिलते गए थीर ठेके भी मिलते गए तो हम यह जानना चाहते हैं कि क्या सरकार ने इस बात की जांच की है कि इस तरह के काम क्यों होते हैं? विलम्ब क्यों होते हैं जिससे कि यह गन्दे काम करने वालों को प्रोत्साहन मिलता है ?

**Shri Raghunath Ramiah:** I may explain the position which is as follows: this firm was blacklisted in 1964. The letter went from this Ministry to the Indian Oil Corporation in 1964 itself showing that this firm also was blacklisted. I am giving the facts as are available in the file.

जी मधु लिमये : किन्तु सारीश को (जबबान)... तब्य ही कुछ रहस्य है किन्तु सारीश को ?