

LOK SABHA DEBATES

1

LOK SABHA

Tuesday, August 20, 1985/ Sravana 29, 1907

(Saka)

*The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock*

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

WELCOME TO PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION FROM MAURITIUS

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, at the outset, I have to make an announcement. On my own behalf and on behalf of the Hon. Members of this House, I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Chattradhari Daby, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Mauritius, Mrs. Daby and Mr. Jagdish Goburdhun, MLA, who are on a visit to India as our honoured guests. Furthermore, on your behalf I may convey our best felicitations congratulations and good wishes because they are newly married and are on a honeymoon.

They arrived in New Delhi on 15 August, 1985. They are now seated in the Special Box. We wish them a happy and fruitful stay in our county. Through them we convey our greetings and best wishes to the Parliament, Government and the friendly people of Mauritius.

2

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS TO PRIME MINISTER

[*English*]

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU (Gobichettipalayam) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, on a point of information. Today being the birthday of our Prime Minister, we wish him a happy birthday, Sir.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Sir, during the Question Hour we can only ask whether it is a fact that today is his birthday !

MR. SPEAKERS : As it is, I will convey to him on behalf of the whole House our heartiest good wishes and good luck for more successes.

[*Translation*]

SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, where is he celebrating his birthday today ; is there any information about it ?

MR. SPEAKER : It has already been celebrated, what greater good wishes of patriotism can be there than this that our country may go on making progress.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[*English*]

Import of Anti Cancer Drugs

*389. SHRI JAGANNATH PATTHNAIK : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are importing anti-cancer drugs in the country ;

(b) if so, the details regarding their names :

(c) whether Government have noticed that these drugs are sold at very high prices in spite of the fact that Ministry of Finance has exempted *these drugs from the custom duty ; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND INDUSTRY AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) The prices of the imported anti-cancer drugs are fixed under the provisions of Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1979 based on the landed cost of such formulations after allowing 50% mark-up thereon. The imported formulations can be sold at prices not exceeding the prices so fixed under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1979.

SHRI JAGANNATH PATTNAIK : Mr. Speaker, Sir, is there any move to motivate the Indian manufacturers to produce the new basic drug even if it means to using sophisticated technology and computerisation wherever it is necessary ? It may so, I know the details thereof ?

SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL : Sir, recently some of our indigenous drug manufacturers have started manufacturing some drugs. For instance, one drug manufacturer, viz, CIPLA, are manufacturing vinblastin and vincristin, but they have just now started and the manufacture is in a very small quantity and whether it is acceptable to the consumers or not, it is very difficult to say now. Another drug, that is, cis-platin is being manufactured by Tamil Nadu Dadha. These are the two parties who are manufacturing indigenously two or three items, but the rest of the items are being imported.

SHRI JAGANNATH PATTNAIK : I want to know whether the Ministry of Fertilisers and Chemicals is going to

announce a new drug policy and what is the attitude of this Ministry towards the suggestion that "Taxes on Drugs and Intermediates should be reduced to the minimum making the drug available at a reasonable price". If so, what steps have been taken so far in this regard ?

SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL : Sir, the National Drugs and Pharmaceutical Development Council has submitted a report with regard to the review of the drug policy to the Government which is under consideration and the Government has not taken any final decision. So far as encouraging production of anti-cancer drugs are concerned, these anti-cancer drugs have been declared as drugs delicensed and they are for non-MRTP and non-FERA companies to produce.

SHRI JAGANNATH RAO : Sir.....

MR. SPEAKER : Jagannathji after Jagannathji !

SHRI JAGANNATH RAO : Sir, apart from the manufacture of allopathic drugs, does the Government intend to encourage Ayurvedic physicians who are carrying on research in the field of cancer treatment so that they can also develop a drug which will reach the common man ?

SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL : So far as developing of Ayurvedic drugs for cancer purposes is concerned, the concerned Ministry is the Health Ministry, not this Ministry.

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU : May I know one thing from the hon. Minister ? Cancer is an incurable disease, that is what the doctors say — the doctorates in Medicine and the doctorates in Surgery also. They say that it is an incurable disease and it is also a contagious disease. That is what they say, I do not know whether it is true or not.

MR. SPEAKER : Do not put more fright on the people.

(Interruptions).

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU ; May I know this from the hon. Minister ? You are importing anti-cancer drugs and today being the birthday of our Prime Minister,

we are starting anti-poverty programme, I think.....(*Interruptions*). Of course, it does not come under this.

(*Interruptions*).

MR. SPEAKER : Anti-cancer programme.

(*Interruptions*).

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU : I also feel that it is not connected with it.

(*Interruptions*).

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : What has the birthday to do with cancer ?

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : Ominous connections.

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU : I want a reply—not an anti-positive reply, but a positive reply—from you with regard to cancer. You have already stated with regard to the drugs which are being imported, but the doctors say that the Ayurvedic medicines or drugs are very much new for the treatment of cancer. What is the reply from the Minister ?

SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL : I have already made it clear that so far as anti-cancer drugs are concerned, there is absolutely no import duty at all. But I agree with the Members that these anti-cancer drugs are very very costly. They are costly not only in our country but also throughout the world, wherever you go. I have got the figures to say that in U.K. these anti-cancer drugs are costlier than what we have in our country. But any-how, they are costly drugs.

The other question which the hon. Member wanted to know from me is, whether cancer is incurable. So much development has taken place and so much research is being done. Although I am not a doctor or an expert, I am told that if it is detected in the initial stages, in the beginning stages, then it is curable.

SHRI MURLI DEORA : Sir, I would like to ask the Minister whether it is a fact that recently the Government has delicensed several drugs. If so, when are they going to implement the policy decision ? Because not only anti-cancer drugs but several other drugs are also not available in the market.

SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL : We have already delicensed them. It is for the manufacturers to take advantage of that.

SHRI G. G. SWELL : Sir, there is a saying that if the rich could hire others to die for them, the poor would have a nice living. Now, the Minister has admitted that these anti-cancer drugs are terribly expensive. I would like to ask a question whether many of the diseases in the rich world are iatrogenic and in this respect, whether the Minister would think many times before he encourages these kinds of drugs in the country.

SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL : Sir, we will be too happy and we will welcome if the indigenous manufacturers develop anti-cancer drugs here in our country itself.

SHRI G. G. SWELL : I would like to know whether most of the diseases including cancer are iatrogenic.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Is that also a medicine.

SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL : I can only say that if the indigenous manufacturers come forward to manufacture anti-cancer drugs, the Government will go all-out to encourage them.

Setting up of Limestone-based Industries in Rajasthan

*390. SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 6354 on 4 April, 1984 regarding setting up of limestone-based industries in Rajasthan and state :

(a) whether any progress has been made in regard to setting up of some limestone-based industries there ;

(b) if so, the details in this regard ; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN) : (a) to (c) As at present, 11 cement factories with a