

LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Friday, March 17, 1989 /Phalguna 26, 1910
(Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Export of Basmati Rice

*326. SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA†:
SHRI MOHANBHAI PATEL:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of basmati rice exported during the last three years with rates thereof;

(b) the Agency through which the rice is being exported;

(c) the countries to which the rice is exported; and

(d) whether Government propose to ban the export of basmati rice to contain the domestic shortage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI): (a) to (d). A statement is given below:-

STATEMENT

(a) The following table shows the quantity and value of exports of Basmati rice during the last three years:-

Year	Qty (In M. Tonnes)	(Val. (Rs. Crores)
1985-86	2,35,213 *	173.23 *
1986-87	2,37,153 *	206.78 *
1987-88	3,66,111 *	339.98 *

* = Provisional

(Source = Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority)

(b) Export of Basmati rice is allowed under Open General Licence.

(c) The countries to which basmati rice is mainly exported are USSR, Saudi Arabia,

United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, United Kingdom, USA and Baharain.

(d) No, Sir.

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA: I had asked the Minister about the rates of *basmati* rice which is exported, but the hon. Minister has answered my question giving, in the statement, the figures relating to the total value, and not to the rates.

However, may I know whether the working group of APEDA has recommended a series of measures to boost the export of *basmati* rice, and also what those recommendations are, and whether these recommendations include the extension of the area for the production of *basmati* rice and also increase in its quantity?

If so, what is the reaction of the Government on each of their recommendations; and what is the Government's planning to execute those? Besides this, I want to know whether the target fixed for 1988-89 is less than the export of *basmati* rice; and if so, what are the reasons therefor?

SHRI P.R. DAS MUNSI: First of all, I like to inform the hon. member that it is not correct to say that we have not replied to his all questions. In fact, the hon. Member had asked about the quantity of *basmati* rice exported. We have replied to it. Then he had asked about agency. We have also replied to that also. The hon. member had not asked about the price for any particular quantity or particular quality of *basmati* rice. Now I would like to reply to his questions only. First of all, I would like to inform the hon. member that the production of rice and the general cultivation of this particular area is now being looked after by the respective State Governments through their Agricultural Departments. But it is a fact—keeping in view this matter that *basmati* rice is fetching a good price in our export that we did write to several

Chief Ministers, especially Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Haryana where this particular variety of rice is grown, to intensify its production through their own methods; and as such, we are hopeful that the State Governments would respond very actively in this regard. We have also found good response from Punjab and Rajasthan (Kota) where this particular variety is grown. In so far as the price is concerned, we have a system for exporting *basmati* rice. The system is that there should be a minimum export price. Now the minimum export price is Rs 8000/- per metric tonne and also a system of pre-shipment inspection either by the Agricultural Marketing Advisers or by the Export Inspection Agency; through that inspection, it is exported. In so far as the current year's performance is concerned, in 1988-89, I may inform the hon. member from April 1988 to January 1989, the average unit value realisation of *basmati* rice export is a little higher than that of the previous year; it is Rs 9, 696/- per metric tonne, having regard to the fact that our minimum export price was only Rs 8000/- per metric tonne. In so far as the total export is concerned, in 1987-88, the approximate figure was three lakhs and 66 thousand tonnes fetching Rs 339.98 crores for the export price.

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA: I seek your protection. I had asked about the recommendations of APEDA to increase the export of *basmati* rice and its production. What are those recommendations and what is the reaction of the Government to each of those recommendations? This question was not answered by the hon. Minister. I would request him to kindly answer that question.

SHRI P.R. DAS MUNSI: As I have stated, no such specific recommendations have been made. APEDA is an agency to promote export. APEDA, from time to time, makes suggestions. In a seminar held in Delhi, in your august presence we did; we

discussed various things regarding export including basmati rice. We only depend upon the State Governments how far selectively they can grow rice and intensify its production by arranging an area. That is the thing. No other specific recommendations were made.

SHRI SOMNATH RATH : I would like to know from the hon. Minister, whether it is a fact that while exporting basmati rice it is being adulterated, and as such the exports have fallen. I would like to know from the hon. Minister the position on this aspect.

SHRI P.R. DAS MUNSI : The exports have not fallen because, as I have the figures just now, last year we exported 3,66,111 tonnes fetching Rs 339.98 crores and before last year we exported 2,37,153 tonnes fetching Rs 206.78 crores. So, compared to 1986-87 the figure for 1987-88 was higher. In so far as 1988-89, the latest year is concerned, it is not possible to give it at this moment.

SHRI SOMNATH RATH : Has it come to your notice that while exporting it is being adulterated?

SHRI P.R. DAS MUNSI : As I stated earlier, if any complaint comes to us we take very special care but complaints did not come. This is a selective production. Either the exporters will have to go through the Agricultural Marketing Advisor to get the Agmark certification, or the export inspection agency. Secondly, if the Government departments buy on government to government basis, the foreign buyers who buy on behalf of the Government can appoint their own inspecting agency, subject to their own satisfaction, without touching our inspection system. Therefore, no complaint can be there about the rice that is exported to any country.

SHRI MOHD. AYUB KHAN (Udham-

pur) : I would like to enquire from the hon. Minister whether he is aware that sufficient quantity of basmati rice is grown in the Jammu region of Jammu and Kashmir State. I would like to know whether the hon. Minister has contacted the State Government in this behalf.

SHRI P.R. DAS MUNSI : It is not we that contact the respective State Governments. As you know, Sir, and as the hon. Member might also be knowing it is the exporters who go round the whole country; to tap the source of basmati rice in the market.

In so far as selecting the areas to identify the area of basmati cultivation is concerned, we had already intimated the States where it is being grown. The suggestion about Jammu and Kashmir will be kept in mind and we will write to the Chief Minister. But it is also a fact that Jammu and Kashmir people consume more basmati rice for their domestic Biryani and due to that reason they may not leave much for export.

Supply of Coal to Thermal Power Stations in Gujarat

*327. **SHRI RANJITSINGH GAEKWAD :** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways could make timely supply of coal to the Thermal Power Stations (TPS) in Gujarat during 1988;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor and its effect on power generation in the State;

(c) the quantity of coal supplied to Thermal Power Stations in Gujarat against the allotted quantity with respect to each Thermal Power Station in the State during the year; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken on the part of the Railways for timely supply of