

who table the questions are not present here. And if I encourage other hon. Members to take up those questions, no hon. Members who table the questions will be here in his seat. I am not going to allow this indulgence.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

उत्तर प्रदेशमें बिस्की-कर

अल्प सूचना प्रश्न सं० १०: श्री रघुनाथ सिंह: क्या वित्त मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि नमक, लाद्यान्न एवं अन्य जीवनोपयोगी आवश्यक वस्तुओं पर उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार ने बिस्की कर (सेल्स टैक्स) लगा दिया है; और—

(ख) यदि हां, तो क्या केन्द्रीय सरकार से इस सम्बन्ध में विचार-विमर्श किया गया था और स्वीकृति प्राप्त कर ली गयी थी ?

वित्त मंत्री (सी० डी० बेशमुख) : (क) तथा (ख). जी, हां ।

Shri Feroze Gandhi: Was sanction accorded in general terms for the issue of an ordinance regarding the imposition of sales tax, or were all the commodities on which the tax was sought to be levied brought to the notice of the Finance Minister?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh : The law requires that sanction should be given in relation to specific items.

Shri Feroze Gandhi : Is it a fact that the Government of India has been giving support to the prices of food-grains, including wheat, rice and coarse grains?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh : Yes, Sir.

Mr. Speaker : How does it arise?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh : In reply to the original question the Finance Minister said, "Yes, Sir". May I know whether the Government of India has made known to all the States in the country that such ordinance may be issued there if the State Governments like?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh : We have not circularised the State Governments. It is for the State Governments who wish to impose taxes on

these essential goods, to approach the Central Government for the President's assent.

Shri A. M. Thomas : Apart from the recommendation of the State Government, has the Central Government exercised its own independent judgment over the question and, if so, what has been the result of it?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh : Yes, Sir, that judgment has been exercised generally in accordance with the recommendations made in this behalf by the Taxation Enquiry Commission.

श्री आर० एन० सिंह : मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि इस आर्डिनेन्स (अभ्यादेश) को लागू करने से पहले क्या उत्तर प्रदेश की सरकार ने राष्ट्रपति से आज्ञा ले ली थी, और अगर ले ली थी तो कब ?

श्री सी० डी० बेशमुख : फरवरी में ले ली थी ।

श्री आर० एन० सिंह : किस डेट (तारीख) को?

अध्यक्ष महोदय : डेट नहीं । I am not allowing it. What if it is on the 10th, 11th or 12th ?

Shri C. D. Pande : May I know if the U. P. Government when they asked for permission to promulgate the ordinance also mentioned about the nature of the taxation and the incidence of the taxation, how far it will fall on the people—the nature and quantity?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh : Their proposals, according to my information, necessarily involved a statement of the rates. I do not think they made a mention of the possible incidence on the population.

Shri C. D. Pande : May I also know, in view of the growing tendency among the States to increase taxation, whether there will be a co-ordinated policy of taxation?

Mr. Speaker : That cannot be discussed in Question Hour.

Shri C. D. Deshmukh : Sir, should like to say one thing in regard to that, if you will permit me.

Mr. Speaker : Very well.

Shri C. D. Deshmukh*: And that is that the recommendations of the Taxation Enquiry Commission included a recommendation that the rate should not exceed a certain rate on some of these articles and that the tax should be a single point tax, (*An Hon. Member:* This is not). So, while the assent of the President was indicated, we made the condition that the tax on the sale of these goods should be at single point, at the last stage of sale or purchase, and the rate should not exceed three pies in the rupee as proposed by the Taxation Enquiry Commission.

श्री सिंहासन सिंह : क्या मंजूरी देते समय इस बात पर विचार किया गया था कि साल्ट टैक्स (नमक कर) और गल्ले पर टैक्स, ये गरीबों पर ज्यादा असर करते हैं, और इसी कारण महात्मा गांधी ने साल्ट टैक्स को दूर करने के लिये आन्दोलन चलाया था ?

श्री सी० डी० बेशमुख : जी हां, विचार तो जरूर किया गया था। अभी बहुत से प्रदेश हैं जिनमें इन वस्तुओं के उपर सम्पत्ती कर है, जैसे की घान्य के उपर बिहार, मद्रास, आन्ध्र और हैद्राबाद में, गुड्स के उपर बिहार, मद्रास आन्ध्र, मध्य भारत, मैसूर, पेंसू, पंजाब, ट्रावनकोर-कोचीन और विन्ध्य प्रदेश में, और नमक के उपर मद्रास, आन्ध्र, पेंसू और ट्रावनकोर-कोचीन में।

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha : The hon. Member, Shri Feroze Gandhi, asked about the price support policy. May I know how the policy of the imposition of sales tax on foodgrains? How did the Central Government give permission for this in spite of the fact that they are giving price support to foodgrains?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh : It is possible that if the tax was excessive, it might interfere with the price support or price limitation measures that may be contemplated by the Food and Agriculture Ministry. And it is perhaps unfortunate that no specific consultation with the Food and Agriculture Ministry took place on this particular point.

Shri Feroze Gandhi : Did you consult the Food and Agriculture Ministry?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh : I said : no. I said it is unfortunate that it did not strike the Ministries concerned to consult the Food and Agriculture Ministry, because the Cabinet had taken a general decision on this in favour of accepting the Taxation Enquiry Commission's recommendations.

Shri Feroze Gandhi : Is it a fact that the Government of India has been releasing wheat and rice from the Central stocks to restrict the rise in the price of these foodgrains in U. P.?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh : I believe that is correct, but my friend would know better.

An Hon. Member : The Minister of Food and Agriculture is here.

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. P. Jain) : Yes, Sir. We have been releasing foodgrains, and I am sure about wheat.

Mr. Speaker : This has been sufficiently answered. I will take up the next question.

Some Hon. Members : This is important.

Shri Feroze Gandhi : Even the Question Hour is not over.

FIRE IN HYDRO-ELECTRIC WORKS IN TRAVANCORE-COCHIN STATE

S. N. Q. No. 11. Shri Punnoose : Will the Minister of Home Affairs be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that there was a fire in the Hydro-Electric Works at Pallivasal in Travancore-Cochin State;

(b) if so, whether any investigation is being made by the State or Central Government into the cause of the fire; and

(c) the extent of the damage?

*This was subsequently corrected by the Minister of Finance (Shri C. D. Deshmukh) vide Part II Debate, dated 14-4-56.