

[English]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: This incident of alarm chain pulling is alarmingly increasing. If you take it into consideration, in 1985, there were only one lakh and odd incidents of alarm chain pulling. In 1991 there were 3, 27, 058 cases of alarm chain pulling. The hon. Member Shri Nitish Kumar comes from Bihar. In 1991 there were 64, 057 cases of alarm chain pulling. You may feel that there is no alarm chain pulling in the just reason. I do not think so. We have to see it as part of the system. In spite of the miscreants involving in this activity, as a system as a whole we have to keep it in mind. We will keep it.

So far as measures of pauchtality and performance maintenance are concerned, we are taking adequate measures.

SHRI RAM KAPSE: It is our general experience that during summer, trains are late. It is generally observed that shortage of drinking water at difference stations is the real reasons for delay. I would like to ask the Minister whether any study has been undertaken about the shortage of water and its relation to the delay. I would also like to ask the Minister whether he would like to correct the reply given by him. You have mentioned that the accident is the reason which is out of your control, that is, the railways control. I cannot imagine this. If you are not responsible for the accident, then for what are the railways responsible? Would you like to correct the reply given in part (b)?

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: Sir, so far as the first part of the question is concerned, that is, about the drinking water, it is true that sometimes passengers get annoyed and they do not allow trains to move further. Drinking water is not available and sometimes the fans and other electrical fittings are wrong. But it does not regularly happen in every train or in the delayed trains. It does

happen now and then in some trains. Therefore, the administration has taken adequate note of the lack of the drinking water particularly in summer. There are certain stations where sometimes there is no proper availability of water even. In such conditions, railways take the required measures to bring the water also from a far off place.

So far as part B of the question is concerned, correction is not needed because what happens is if an accident takes place, all the trains following it automatically have to be detained or they have to be diverted to reach their destinations. That is how it affects. (Interruptions)

SHRI RAM KAPSE: Who is responsible for accidents?

[Translation]

Cane Price Arrears

*103. SHRI KAMAL BHOGENDR
JHA:
SHRI KAMAL CHAUDHRY:

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) the sugarcane price paid to the farmers by the sugar mills in the Public cooperative and private sectors in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Maharashtra, Orissa and Tamil Nadu, respectively during 1992-93;

(b) the latest estimates of dues payable to the sugarcane growers by sugar mills as on date, State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to ensure timely payment of such dues to the cane growers?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) The range of cane prices being paid during 1992-93 season, as reported by sugar mills as on 31. 1.1993, may be seen in Annexure-I

(b) Arrears of cane price payable by sugar mills to farmers during the 1992-93 season as reported by 198 sugar mills as on 31. 1.1993 and 30 mills as on 31.12.1992 were Rs. 405.32 crores. State-wise and Sector-wise details of these arrears may be seen in the Annexure-II.

(c) As per the Sugarcane (Control) Order issued under the Essential Commodities Act, it is obligatory on the part of all sugar mills to pay the Statutory Minimum Prices of sugarcane to growers. In the case of State-advised prices of sugarcane which are substantially higher than the statutory minimum price the responsibility for ensuring timely payments of cane price dues lies with the State Governments which have the necessary powers and field organisations to enforce such payments.

In order to prevent the accumulation of arrears of cane dues to farmers, which can lead to unfortunate law and order situations, State Governments have been advised to follow a more reasonable pricing policy and allow sugar mills to share their profits with growers as per the Bhargava formula.

Annexure-I

Range of Sugarcane Prices Reported to Have Been Paid by the Factories During 1992-93 Season Sector-wise as on 31-1-1993.

Range of sugarcane price (Rs. per Qtl.)

States	Range of sugarcane price (Rs. per Qtl.)			
	Public Sector	Private Sector	Cooperative Sector	
1	2	3	4	
Bihar	41.50 to 46.50	43.25	No Mill	
Punjab	46.00 to 50.00	46.00 to 50.00	46.00 to 50.00	
Orissa	27.84	Report not received	39.00 to 45.00	
Tamil Nadu	27.84 to 29.67	27.00 to 33.99	29.54 to 39.21	
Uttar Pradesh	46.00 to	45.00 to	46.00	

Range of sugarcane price (Rs. per Qtl.)

States	Public Sector	Private Sector	Cooperative Sector
1	2	3	4
Maharashtra	49.00 No Mill	49.00 30.00 to 31.00	49.00 30.00 to 43.12

ANNEXURE-II

Sector-wise Position of Arrears of Sugarcane Prices Relating to 1992-93 Season as on 31.1.93 in Respect of 198 Sugar Mills and as on 31-12-92 in Respect

(figure in lakh Rs.)

State	Cane Price Due			Cane Price Paid			Cane Price Arrears					
	Public	Coopera- tive	Total	Public	Coopera- tive	Total	Public	Coopera- tive	Total			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Punjab	1778.14	6630.54	1929.66	10238.34	1059.40	4549.32	1238.41	6837.13	716.74	1991.22	691.25	3401.21
Haryana	0.00	4951.16	0.00	4951.16	0.00	2888.01	0.00	288.01	0.00	2063.15	0.00	2063.15
Rajasthan	0.00	102.12	0.00	102.12	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	102.12	0.00	102.12
West Uttar Pradesh	1282.77	3707.41	8938.72	13928.98	441.95	1574.79	5988.62	8005.36	840.82	2132.62	2950.10	5923.54
Central Uttar Pradesh	4761.80	7477.69	2260.68	14500.17	2145.80	3356.05	922.73	6424.58	2616.00	4121.64	1337.96	8075.59
East Uttar Pradesh	2813.32	621.23	5162.58	8597.13	802.44	32.33	3475.48	4310.25	2010.88	588.90	1687.10	4286.88

(figure in lakh Rs.)

State	Cane Price Due			Cane Price Paid			Cane Price Arrears					
	Public	Coopera- tive	Total	Public	Coopera- tive	Total	Public	Coopera- tive	Total			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Uttar Pradesh	8857.89	11808.33	16361.98	37028.20	3390.19	4963.17	10386.88	18740.19	5467.70	6843.16	5995.15	18286.01
Madhya Pradesh	0.00	179.98	361.97	561.95	0.00	85.99	22.87	308.86	0.00	93.99	159.10	253.09
South Gujarat	0.00	6177.89	0.00	6177.89	0.00	5845.59	0.00	5845.59	0.00	332.30	0.00	332.30
Saurashtra	0.00	428.87	0.00	428.87	0.00	269.20	0.00	269.20	0.00	159.67	0.00	159.67
Gujarat	0.00	6806.76	0.00	6806.76	0.00	6114.79	0.00	614.79	0.00	491.97	0.00	491.97
South Maharashtra	0.00	266376.20	1891.04	28267.24	0.00	23667.07	1596.81	25163.88	0.00	2809.13	294.23	3103.36
North Maharashtra	0.00	7385.14	0.00	7385.14	0.00	5757.77	0.00	5757.77	0.00	1627.37	0.00	1627.37
Maharashtra	0.00	33731.34	1891.04	35652.38	0.00	29324.84	1596.81	30921.65	0.00	4436.50	294.23	4730.73
North Bihar	549.88	0.00	4986.88	5536.86	16.36	0.00	1928.07	1944.43	533.52	0.00	3058.91	3592.43
South Bihar	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bihar	549.88	0.00	4986.98	5536.86	16.36	0.00	1928.07	1944.43	533.52	0.00	3058.91	3592.48
Assam	0.00	72.21	0.00	72.21	0.00	68.13	0.00	68.13	0.00	4.08	0.00	4.08

(figure in lakh Rs.)

State	Cane Price Due			Cane Price Paid			Cane Price Arrears					
	Public	Coopera- tive	Total	Public	Coopera- tive	Total	Public	Coopera- tive	Total			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Andhra Pradesh	0.00	1700.75	2957.98	4658.73	0.00	1476.97	1757.36	3234.33	0.00	223.78	1200.62	1424.40
Karnataka	3348.85	7198.05	3767.20	14314.10	2622.35	5135.02	2236.98	994.35	726.50	2063.03	1530.22	4319.75
Tamil Nadu	358.02	4967.38	4069.66	9395.06	299.34	4076.29	3517.41	7893.05	53.68	891.09	552.25	1502.00
Kerala	0.00	135.43	59.33	194.76	0.00	135.39	59.19	194.58	0.00	0.04	0.14	0.18
Orissa	0.00	508.32	7.37	515.69	0.00	341.72	0.00	341.72	0.00	166.60	7.37	
West Bengal	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Nagaland	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Pondichery	0.00	179.19	344.06	523.25	0.00	112.71	313.85	426.56	0.00	66.48	30.21	
Goa	0.00	323.33	0.00	323.33	0.00	233.62	0.00	233.62	0.00	89.71	0.00	
All India	14892.78		36757.23		7387.64	23257.78		90141.39	7505.14	19526.92	13499.45	
		79022.89		130672.90		59495.97						

SHRI KAMAL CHAUDHARY: Hon. Speaker, Sir, as per the reply given by the Minister, the sugarcane price paid in all the three sectors of Punjab, the public sector, private sector and the cooperative sector is Rs. 46 to Rs. 50. The very reason why this question has been asked is that it is very alarming that arrears, which are due to be paid to the farmers in Punjab itself, are Rs. 34 crores and the total all over the country is Rs. 405 crores. It is a matter of shame that the small farmer in the field is not being paid his dues. The Government is just wishing and saying that while the levy price of the sugar has been increased from Rs. 26 to Rs. 31, farmers will be paid their dues. I do not think just wishing it would achieve the purpose.

In part (c) of the reply, the Minister has mentioned and I quote:

"State Governments have been advised to follow a more reasonable pricing policy and allow sugar mills to share their profits with growers as per the Bhargava formula."

But the very reply says that Rs. 405 crores is due to the farmers which has not been paid. What action has been taken to ensure that these arrears do not keep accumulating?

[*Translation*]

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to inform hon. Kamal that statutory minimum price of sugarcane is always fixed and in Punjab the state advised price of sugarcane is Rs. 50 quintal. In January this season 2, 250 lakh tonnes of sugarcane was crushed and as per the 9.5 percent recovery norm, outstanding arrear is of the order of Rs. 405 crores all over the country. It takes 15 days to crush the sugarcane after arrival. All the State Governments have been advised to make payment for sugarcane to farmers within one month.

As I have told you that in January itself sugarcane of the value of Rs. 947 crore was crushed. In public sector, private sector and cooperative sector 400 mills are crushing sugarcane in the country. Payments are being disbursed to the farmers and all the sugar mills have been asked to make payment within one month.

SHRI KAMAL CHAUDHARY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the reply of the hon. Minister indicates that so much arrears has mutated up. On a visit to the area where 'mills' are locate.

[*English*]

You will find a traffic jam. Hundreds and thousands of tractors are standing with their sugarcane, to be delivered to the mills. But their due amount is not being paid to them.

[*Translation*]

So much arrear is mounting up. It is the poor who toil hard in the fields. But all the money is gulped down the affluent.

[*English*]

If this amount is deposited in a bank, you can imagine how much interest these people will get. So, something must be done about it. If the amount is not paid within one month, then please see that some actions taken against these mills. You are saying that this is happening in the States where the amount paid is more. It is your own problem. You yourself said that law and order problem can be created. People have been coming to me stating that they are not getting their money. Kindly ensure that the States are told that this amount is paid in time.

Secondly, in Hoshiarpur, the foundation stone was laid by the Punjab Governor with a lot of fanfare for one cooperative

sugar mill, that is Dasua cooperative Sugar Mills. But, unfortunately, since the funds were not given to this sugar mill, it has nearly come to a close down stage. Recently, it has been sold to the private sector. In this regard, I had appraised the Union Finance Minister also.

MR. SPEAKER: Please come to the question?

SHRI KAMAL CHAUDHARY: This mill had finally been sold to the private sector. I would like to request the hon. Minister to ensure that in future such mills which are financed by the Central Financial Agencies, so that they do not close down or are not sold to the private sector. Would be kindly ensure this?

[Translation]

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, my submission to Shri Kamal ji is that we can take any step to provide statutory minimum price to the farmers. By the State Governments....(Interruptions)

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH: Please tell that what measures the Government can take..(Interruptions)

SHRI NITISH KUMAR (Barh): Article 356 can be used if a State Government refuses to give statutory minimum price to the farmers..(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister, please give reply to the question of Shri Kamal.

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, statutory Minimum Price is fixed by the Central Government. This year the Central Government has fixed Rs. 31/- per quintal as Statutory Minimum Price. As per the Sugar Cane Control Order issued under Essential Commodity Act, the Central Government can direct the State Governments

and mills-either in private sector or in public sector or in co-operative sector- to make payments in accordance with it. But the State Governments fix the price at Rs. 49, Rs. 50, Rs. 46 per quintal as a result of which it becomes difficult for the farmers to get minimum price they should get. Therefore the Central Government tell the State Governments that since they have increased prices more than those increased by the Central Government.

They should make arrangement for the payment to the sugarcane growers use their power. Therefore the Central Government has formulated the rule that all the mills in South or in Orissa will give statutory Minimum Price. Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar have fixed Rs. 46 to Rs. 50 as state advised prices which causes the problem of arrears.

[English]

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: In South India, State-advised prices are there.

[Translation]

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: This provision is there in Andhra Pradesh but not in Orissa. In Orissa the statutory minimum price is Rs. 27/-.. (Interruptions)

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria): These figures are not correct.

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: These are not wrong figures. You please try to understand Highest cane price, i.e. Rs. 46 to Rs. 50/- is in Punjab. The State Government has been directed not to keep the arrears of farmers. As soon as the sugar mills get the produce, payment should be made immediately, within a month. I have issued orders to all the mills to clear the arrears by March 31. Such

orders have been issued by the Central Government.

[English]

SHRI KAMAL CHAUDHARY: Sir, my question was about the closing down of Mills.

MR. SPEAKER: No, that does not arise out of that Question. Shri Ajit Singh

[Translation]

SHRI AJIT SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like the hon. Minister to clarify two questions. One is about arrears in all the states, Sugar mills whether in public cooperative or private sector have heavy arrears to pay to farmers. So far as I know, if the arrear is not cleared within a month it would be necessary to pay interest of 15 days on that amount. The Supreme Court has already given its judgment to that effect. The Government claims to obey the judgment of supreme Court in every matter but it does not take any step with regard to the Supreme Court order concerning farmers. Only the Private companies are not are fault, there is a sugar mill in Deoria and another in Kanpur and these are under the Central Government. Arrears payable to farmers by these mills also have not been cleared so far. I would like the Government to implement the Supreme Court judgment. If it is not possible for the Government, then it may kindly clarify whether it would take any action the property of private mills or not.

Secondly, the Government claims that cane price has been increased from Rs. 27/- to Rs. 40/-. However, the farmers have already been getting Rs. 46 to Rs. 50/- increase in cane price as not been of any benefit to farmers. The Government has a formula. I would like to remind the Government that Shri Kidwai had prepared a formula according to which the farmers should be paid 1/8 part of the sugar price, and from

that point of view the sugarcane price should be between Rs. 55 to Rs. 60/- whatever increase may have been made but the actual benefit has not reached the farmers. Which formula does the Government apply to fix the sugarcane price and what steps are proposed to be taken to enable the farmers to get those prices.

SHRI KALPNATH RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Shri Ajit Singh is an expert with regard to Sugarcane. My submission is that as per the Bhargava formula it was decided that out of the total profit 50 per cent will go to the mill owner and 50 percent will be shared by the farmers. This formula was evolved in 1974. With regard to that formula the State Governments said that they would fix prices as per the State advised price. It is responsibility of the Central Government to fix statutory Minimum Prices- which comes to about Rs.31/- per quintal- and fix the sugarcane price in accordance with Bhargava formula evolved in 1974. When State Advisory Board fixes the price, how the Central Government is responsible for that?

SHRI AJIT SINGH: What about these states, where Congress is in power.

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: In Bihar, there is the Government of Shri Laloo Prasad Yadav..(Interruptions)

SHRI ASHOK ANANDRAO DESHMUKH: How prices are fixed.

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in Bihar there is the Government of Shri Laloo Prasad Yadav while in Uttar Pradesh when there was the Government of Shri Kalyan Singh.(Interruptions)

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH: The hon. Minister may kindly tell how long it will take to clear the arrears payable to farmers, where are you diverting the question to? I have not asked about the Bhargava formula.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Kalpnath Rai, if you neglect the Speaker, you are in trouble.

[Translation]

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have given reply to what Shri Ajit Singh has asked.

SHRI VIRENDERA SINGH: He has not given reply.

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: After the Central Government has fixed statutory minimum price, if a mill—whether in cooperative sector, public sector or in corporation in Uttar Pradesh earns profit under the Bhargava formula, 50% of the total profit will go to the mill owner and the remaining 50 per cent will be distributed among farmers. However, since the State Governments have implemented state advised price, it has become difficult to implement state advised price, it has become difficult to implement Bhargava formula thus causing a great difficulty.

Second question he has raised concerns arrears. Under the State Regulation Act, the collector is to get Recovery certificate issued from the commissioner and attached the property of those mill owners who do not pay the price of sugarcane to the farmers to give money to them. But neither the Government of Uttar Pradesh to the Government of Bihar has taken any action this regard. (Interruptions)

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, you are a farmers..

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH: What is the number of collectors against whom action has been taken.. (Interruptions)

SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI:

Half an hour discussion should be held over the matter. (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You give me the notice for half-an hour discussion, I will allow it.

SHRI ANKUSHRAO RAOSAHEB TOPE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to ask the hon. Minister through you whether it is a fact that out of the arrears of Rs. 405.3 crore, only in Uttar Pradesh, the arrears of Rs. 182.86 crore. It comes to near about 45 per cent of the total arrear.. What are the reasons for that?

I congratulate the hon. Minister for the new pricing policy which has been adopted by the Government of India.

I want to know whether because of that new policy, all these arrears would be reduced in future to the maximum number or not.

[Translation]

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is an arrear of Rs. 405 crore in the entire country out of which an arrear of Rs. 183 crore is there in Uttar Pradesh. Orders have been issued to all the sugar-mills in the state to clear the entire arrears up to 31st March, otherwise a ban will be imposed on the sale of free sale sugar.

[English]

SHRI K. P. REDDAIAH YADAV: Sir, is it a fact that the Government received complaints regarding non-payment of levy sugar price when it was hiked sharing of profits according to the Bhargava formula, and making of interest payments when the sugar-mills defaulted? I also want to know from the hon. Minister as to what is the monitoring or reviewing mechanism that the has. Have

you ever monitored or reviewed these lapses when they were specifically brought to your notice?. If you have not done so earlier, are you prepared to do it now regarding the mills which are not following the Bhargava formula in sharing of profits particularly when you have raised the levy sugar price recently?

MR. SPEAKER: What is the monitoring mechanism?

[Translation]

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in order to implement the Bhargava formula the country, the Government has fixed statutory minimum price which is paid by mills to farmers and the profit that would exceed Rs. 31/- will be shared 50 per cent by mills and 50 per cent by farmers..(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: What is the necessity to change the formula itself?

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Bhargava formula is that the Central Government fixes statutory minimum price and the profit exceeding that price will be shared 50 per cent by mills and 50 per cent by farmers. If the State advised price exceeds the statutory minimum price fixed by the Government, then the Bhargava formula is not implemented in those states. In reply to his question, I want to say that the co-operative mills have cleared 75% of these arrears and the private mills, against which these are arrears, have been ordered to make payment to farmers clearing the arrears by 31st March.

SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA: Sir, this is a very serious issue and the hon. Minister should consider it seriously. The hon. Minister is aware that it has been provided in the Sugarcane rice Act that the mills, which will take sugarcane, will have to make payments within 15 days of the supply. If the payment is not made in the said period, the amount will be paid to farmers along with interest. Besides this, it has been also written in the Act that...

MR. SPEAKER: Please ask the question. Others also have to ask questions. There are many Members there..

SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA: It has been written in that Act that if the sugarcane farmer takes his sugarcane to another zone from his zone and is apprehended, he will be imprisoned for 6 months and have to give a of Rs. 500/-. Sir, these are two laws. If the farmer takes his sugarcane to another zone, he will be imprisoned, but is there any provision for enabling him to get the price of sugarcane in time? Sir, he has said that according to rule, the payment is made to farmers against sugar and 85% of the payment has been deposited in their account.... but this has not been implemented in any state till now. This situation would not have arisen if 85% amount against the payment of sugarcane price would have been deposited. I would like to submit to the hon. Minister that thousands of crores of rupees are outstanding in Uttar Pradesh Government mills, in Uttar Pradesh owe maximum arrears and three sugar mills in Padrauna, Gauri and Panchkuyan in Deoria owe mainum arrears. So, I would like to submit to the hon. Minister that those mills which are under him should atleast pay the sugarcane arrears, whether other mills make payment or not.

Sir, secondly, as regards the price which has been increased to Rs. 140/-. I would like to submit that one quintal sugar is made out of eleven quintal sugar-cane. This increased

price will benefit the mill-owners. I would like to know what share the farmers will get put of it.

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in reply to question asked by Shri Ram Nagina Mishra, I have told that orders, have been issued to all the sugar mills in Uttar Pradesh to pay these arrears to farmers by 31st March. That law is implemented on the theory of state statutory minimum price. If the statutory minimum price is Rs. 31/-, the law is implemented, but if the State Government fixes the sugarcane price at Rs. 46 or Rs. 50 per quintal, we cannot implement any law on it.

[English]

SHRI SHANKARRAOD. KALE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, these figures of arrears are prior to the announcement of the sugarcane Policy. After that, the Sugarcane Policy was announced and the Government has recently declared the minimum statutory price for sugarcane for 1992-93. Will it be applicable from the beginning of the seasons in 1992-93? If it is so, will the Government be in a position to see that the sugarcane growers are paid the difference in the statutory price?

[Translation]

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this sugarcane policy will be implemented in October, when the sugarcane season begins.

SHRI SHARED YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, all the replies given by the Minister are according to the old traditions. It is biggest cash crop of our country and you have seen in the House just now that every Member is concerned about it. I would like to submit that most of the agitations launched by farmers in this country were due to the anomalies in this policy and the present

situation of payments. You are aware that several farmers were killed in Ramkota. It is a matter of happiness, as you said, that ours is the largest sugar producing country in the world. Mr. Speaker, Sir, though you, I would like to suggest that the hon. Minister should hold a meeting of the farmers, the Members of Parliament and the government officials, so that they can find out a way to solve this issue. This problem has become so grave that the sugarcane growers are now trying to get rid off this cash crop. So, whether the Government is going to adopt any such way which can fully solve the problem? The Minister is giving a traditional reply. But you have got a big opportunity and if you can solve this problem, the people will always remember you for the future problems of farmers. So, are you going to find a permanent solution by holding a meeting with all the concerned persons and discussing this issue?

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I agree with the suggestion given by Shri Shared Yadav and I will discuss this matter by holding a meeting with him and all the farmers and I promise that all the arrears of the farmers will be cleared.

[English]

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: Sir, it is well known that the sugar producers, viz the sugar mill owners have a special role to play with the ruling party. This was proved earlier also, at the time of the elections. We know that. Therefore, they are given the concessions. This does not surprise me at all that they do not make payments to the poor farmers. What I want to know is this. They have not paid the dues for more than a year. The arrears include the figures as on 31 March 1992. Nearly one year is over since the dues are pending. We all know that in the financial market for one year, 35 to 40 per cent return is available even for short term deposits. This is widely known. You

have allowed them to make profits. But who are the sufferers among the sugarcane growers? Is it true that most of the sugarcane growers, who have been paid, are very small farmers? That is the question I want you to answer.

[Translation]

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to inform the hon. Member, as a Minister that dues in respect of the farmers cannot be unpaid for a period of more than 3 months. (Interruptions)

SHRI ANIL BASU: Sir, one year's time has lapsed since then and now you are giving a statement in this regard.

[English]

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: The Minister has mentioned in the reply: "Dues as on 31.3.93". That is his statement.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, you do not have to reply.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria): Mr. Speaker, Sir, we started our political career the leadership of Shri Kalp Nath and tossed a slogan that "the price of Maund of Sugar arcaue should be equal to the price of a kilogram of sugar". It was the Kidwai formula. But the reply given by the hon. Minister is very confusing. Payment to the farmers in U.P. for the crushing season for 1991-92 is still due. The hon. Minister has stressed upon clearing the dues within three-month time but the agreed price, fixed by the State Government which is also accepted by the four sugar mills of Central Government in Uttar Pradesh has not been paid so far and a sum of sum Rs. 30 crores is still outstanding with these mills for the last crushing season. On the other hand, the Minister is

giving assurance to make a payment within three months time therefore, I would like to have seasons wise break up of sugarcane crushing in this regard from the Minister and how much amount is to be paid to the sugarcane growers of Uttar Pradesh for the crushing season of 1991-92. You have provided the figures upto the period of December, 1992. You should make it clear as to what are the dues of the last crushing season and what is the share of the four sugar mills of Central Government in it and what steps are you going to take in clearing these dues.

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, if the hon. Member Shri Mohan Singh writes to me. I will reply to it in detail and, through you, I give my word that the dues will be paid within three month's time.

SHRI SATYADEO SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, U.P. has the highest number of sugar mills. I would like to attract the attention of the hon. Minister that maximum amount is due on cooperative and Government sector. You say that the State Government will pay the minimum statutory price but presently it has become your responsibility be when are you going to clear such dues. Secondly, through you I would like to submit that maximum outstanding is towards small farmer. Those who own bullock carts have to suffer because of under weightment. Last time, Government had arranged to make payment through Bank Cheques, to check this malpractice. I want to know, whether you are going to implement this system or withdrawing it. You will not implement it in the interest of mill owners. So far as the question of safeguarding their interest is concerned, Rs. 1.80 and another 40 parse has been given to them as bonus. I want to know that how soon you are going to clear the dues of the Sugar mills in U.P. towards the sugarcane farmers.

MR. SPEAKER: It has already been

answered. The Minister has answered it.

SHRI SATYADEO SINGH: Sir, my question is why you are saying to clear the dues within three months time in respect of the last crushing season. Why do not you make it early. When are you going to make payment in respect of the dues of the last season, why you are taking three months time in this regard.

MR. SPEAKER: You are not coming to specific question, rather you are repeating it.

(Interruptions)

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, at that time B.J.P. was in power in U.P. Why should I pay for your deeds. I have given my word that dues of farmers pending for more than three months will be paid. I know I will have to pay for the deeds of your Government. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH: What have you done by increasing the prices of sugar produced during the reign of our Government?.. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ASHOK ANDANDRAO DESHMUKH (Prabhani): The Central Government has fixed sugarcane price at Rs. 31 whereas many a State Governments are paying Rs. 46 to 50 per quintal to their farmers. Why this differencede? I want to know, why the prices fixed by the Agricultural Price Commission is different from the one fixed by the State Agricultural Price Commission. What are the reasons for this? Secondly, what rate the norms for deciding the price by the Agricultural price Commission.

SHRI KALP NATH RAI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Agriculture Cost and Price Commission every year fixes the price of sugarcane crop. This year it fixed the price at Rs. 29 but due

to an increase in the price of wheat and rice the minimum price was fixed as Rs. 31. Now the State Governments fix their price statewise as ours is federal system. If a Chief Minister of a States fixes the price of sugarcane at Rs. 50 per quintal then we cannot do much about it.

[English]

SHRI LOKANATH CHOUDHURY: Sir, I want to know whether the arrears given are the arrears of a particular year or are accumulated arrears, What are the arrears of the previous years? If the problem is so chronic, then what Government is proposing to save the farmers from the clutches of the sugar mill owners?

MR. SPEAKER: He has taken the responsibility.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Public Distribution System

*104. **SHRI PALA K. M. MATHEW:** Will the the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether complaints have been received regarding supply of poor quality foodgrains under the Public Distribution System during 1992-93 till date;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the remedial steps taken to ensure supply of standard quality of foodgrains and check their diversion from the Public Distribution System?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES
CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DIS-