

12.18 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

[*English*]

Reported Distribution of adulterated ineffective pesticides to farmers in Punjab

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA (Sangrur): I call the attention of the Minister of Agriculture to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon :—

"The reported distribution of adulterated/ineffective pesticides to farmers in Punjab and other parts of the country adversely affecting agricultural production and steps taken by the Government in that regard."

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BHRJAN LAL): The Government of India is fully committed to ensure the supply of pesticides of good quality to safeguard the interests of the farmers.

In a vast country like India, occasional instances of unscrupulous individuals indulging in unfair practices in the distribution of pesticides come to the notice of the Government. These are dealt with strictly in accordance with the provisions of the Insecticides Act, 1968.

There was a report in the Tribune, dated 12.8.1988, highlighting that Punjab Agriculture Department had sold expired pesticides to the farmers. No other report regarding sale and distribution of adulterated and ineffective pesticides in the country have been received recently.

I have ascertained the facts from the Government of Punjab. A small quantity of pesticides was sold by the Punjab Agriculture Department to the farmers within 25

days of the expiry of the validity period. This was reportedly done in view of the fact that the validity period expired but recently and the farmers stood to gain by the lower prices compared to open market prices. Instructions have been issued by the Punjab Government to stop such sales.

The scheme of distribution of pesticides is being run by the Punjab Government at 'No Profit No Loss' basis. The Punjab Government has issued instructions to all Deputy Commissioners in the State to personally check the quality of pesticides and take samples for analysis. The District Police Chiefs have also been given instructions to provide assistance and security to sample collecting teams. The process of checking is being carried out in all the districts. A Pesticide Selection Committee has been established under the chairmanship of the Vice Chancellor, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, to recommend the brand names of pesticides. Only ISI/BIS marked pesticides are recommended after they have cleared the bio-efficacy test of Punjab Agricultural University.

In Punjab, high levels of agriculture production have been sustained at a steady level. This has been the result of continuous effort by ensuring the quality of pesticides supplied, through enforcement, vigilance and surprise checks put in vigorous operation and a large number of samples being collected and analysed.

Since the coming into force of Insecticides Act, 1968 and the rules framed thereunder, 18 States and one Union Territory have so far established 37 Pesticide Laboratories with an overall capacity for analysing about 40,000 samples per annum. A Central Insecticides Laboratory has been set up at Faridabad with branches at Bombay and Hyderabad. Two regional pesticides laboratories have been established one at Kanpur and one at Chandigarh.

Enforcement of quality control of pesticides has been stressed with an overall purview of the Insecticides Act, 1968 and the rules framed thereunder. The States have notified functionaries for the enforcement of the various provisions of the Act.

[Sbri Bhajan Lal]

The need for stricter enforcement of quality control measures has been stressed upon the State Governments from time to time. The State Governments have assured that they are taking appropriate steps in this regard. I have recently written to the Chief Ministers of States to launch special campaigns at frequent intervals for drawal and analysis of samples. This will have a salutary effect and ensure the supply of unadulterated pesticides to the farmers. Several Chief Ministers have assured me that appropriate action is being taken by them.

The Government of India is very alive to the need for ensuring the quality of pesticides. I assure the House that constant vigil is maintained on the quality of pesticides sold to the farmers. Whenever any lapse comes to notice, stringent action under the law is taken.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOWALIA (Sangrur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have attentively heard to Hon. Minister of Agriculture. I do not think that the Minister of Agriculture or the Government of India do not provide assistance to those people or think about their welfare. The Government is well aware that substandard pesticides are being supplied to the farmers. A reference has been made to the news item published in the Tribune dated August 12. The most regrettable part about it is that the pesticide "Lebaseed-1000" was supplied after expiry date had passed and more than 200 sellers sold it at various place in Punjab which is a total exploitation of the farmers. It has just now been mentioned that a pesticide selection committee has been set up under the chairmanship of the chancellor of Punjab Agriculture University, Ludhiana. This step has been taken only after the matter was brought to the notice of the Government and the House. As a result, the Additional Chief Secretary made a statement that the committee has been constituted. It has been due to our efforts that the farmers were benefitted and the Government took active action. I appeal the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and this August House to adopt a unified approach - to abolish the practice of supplying the substandard material to the farmers. In a fruit market people select fruits and then they purchase them. The remaining rotten fruits

are sold to the farmers. As regards pesticides etc. we find the same thing. Adulterated or otherwise unfit pesticides are supplied to the farmers it is presumed that the cloth, if defective, will be sold to the farmers. This is the approach and the result is that the pesticides were supplied to the farmers of which expiry date was already over. I urge to pay adequate attention towards this matter. I would like to begin with Hon. Dr Bairam Jakhar, who made a statement in the House on August 3 :

[English]

"The Speaker, Mr. Bairam Jakhar, observed in the Lok Sabha today that people in pesticides business were indulging in a lot of corruption in Punjab and asked the Government to look into it."

Then the Minister of State for Agriculture, Mr. Sbyam Lal Yadav, said as follows :

"I am going to inquire into it."

[Translation]

He further observed.

[English]

"The Speaker said the authorities had also withdrawn the 25 per cent subsidy on insecticides and the entire cotton crop in Ludhiana was damaged."

[Translation]

I would urge Shri Chowdhary to enquire as to why 25 per cent subsidy has been withdrawn. The Central Government should ask the Government of Punjab as to why this subsidy has been withdrawn. The Hon. Speaker has stated that :

[English]

"The entire cotton crop in Ludhiana was damaged."

[*Translation*]

He has not been able to use strong words. The farmers of Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh are already complaining that priority in power supply is being given to the air-conditioners in Delhi and not given to the farmers for agriculture purposes. All the three Ministers are present here, they belong to Haryana and Uttar Pradesh where the problem is acute. Shri Yadav, Shri Chowdhary and Shri Shastri must have been getting complaints earlier also. Actually the multi-national companies are playing havoc with this country. These pesticides are manufactured by these companies. "Lebaseed-1000" is manufactured in collaboration with a German firm. The Government should take note of it and take action against the multi-national companies. Why do these companies play havoc with India? Why are they exploiting Indian farmers? The Hon. Minister has referred to Mr Gill, the additional Secretary, who has said that a panel is being formed which will study the problem and submit its recommendations to the Government.

[*English*]

He said that the DCS had been asked to conduct raids to stop the sale of substandard fertilisers and pesticides.

[*Translation*]

We had raised the issue of sale of substandard pesticides, a week ago in the House. Has the Government of Punjab submitted any information during this week regarding the raids conducted and the people found guilty for selling substandard pesticides and the quantity of the pesticides seized and the number of the persons going to be prosecuted. I would urge the Hon. Minister to include all these points in his reply.

I would also like to say that the Government should exercise control over the sale of poisonous pesticides. These are harmful in two ways. We all belong to agricultural families and we know that children of a number of farmers fall ill and even die due to the adverse effects of these pesticides. New

ailments are coming to light with the extensive use of pesticides and the farmers are unable to the medical treatment in near by towns. All India Medical Institute of Medical Sciences has registered about 114 cases from Rohtak in Haryana, 55 cases from Uttar Pradesh and 30 cases from Madhya Pradesh. Has the Government ever conducted a survey to know the number of the people who fell ill due to spraying of pesticides or after consuming of pesticides treated foodgrains or vegetables? I do not oppose the modern techniques of science but I have personally noticed that the use of pesticides like Aldrin, BHC, Lindane, Daldrin etc has been reduced to the minimum in the countries like United States and United Kingdom. They have discovered its substitute and further research work in this regard is in progress. They have made successful experiment that if the healthy seeds are supplied, then there is no need to use these pesticides. Would the Hon. Minister take similar measures in our country also? So far the statistics are concerned, the advanced countries have been reducing the use of such pesticides. I know that the Hon. Minister is an efficient man and is capable to accomplish swiftly any task assigned to him. I would like to bring to his notice that 81 per cent of the total pesticides are used in Asian countries and out of that 26 per cent is used in India, 19.3 per cent in South Korea, 10.2 per cent in Pakistan and 1 per cent in Bangla Desh. The data go to show that these pesticides are used extensively in India. Now the question is that when there is a large market to sell these pesticides and adequate opportunities exist for the manufacturers, why then are they exploiting the farmers in India? Why do they sell substandard material? As far as Bangla Desh is concerned, only 1 per cent of the total pesticides are used there while in India the quantity is about one-fourth of that used in the whole world. Under these circumstances, the matter becomes more serious. So, special attention should be paid to this issue. I would like to mention one thing more. As I have already stated that 6 per cent of the used 26 per cent pesticides are being manufactured indigenously and 75 per cent of this 26 per cent are being manufactured by multi-national companies. Sir, I would like to give a suggestion because the maximum use of the pesticides in our country is in the State of Punjab. These are extensively used

[Shri Balwant Singh Ramoowalia]

in the States of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. Farmers are being exploited. We should start a public awareness campaign in this regard. The village level workers or the field level workers who are engaged for the application of these pesticides should be instructed through the media of radio, television, press to use them carefully.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to emphasise and request the Minister of Agriculture that some system should be evolved so that the farmer who is going to purchase the pesticide may know about its genuineness. He should know the contents that the pesticide has and the effects of its use also. I would like to lay special emphasis upon this aspect. In the end, I must state that the farmers are suffering huge financial loss due to supply of substandard pesticides and spurious fertilisers them on higher rates. The farmers are already financially weak and this type of loot would mean a great injustice to them and to the country. Special attention should be given to this. The condition of farmers in the country is not good. They are unable to get even the fair prices of their produce.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Agriculture Minister Shri Bhajan Lal and also Shri Shastriji have performed some special worships, hawans and sacrifices. Just because of it, we are having very good rains this year. I congratulate Hon. Minister for it and also pay my thanks to God for the good rains. Although some areas have been affected by floods but Hon. Minister has agreed to give compensation to the flood-affected persons. On the one hand, though ten per cent of the farmers have suffered loss because of floods, but at the same time 100 per cent farmers have been benefited by good rains.

India is a very large country and good rains are very useful for it. I would also like to urge upon the Hon. Minister to pay more attention to the areas where the consumption of pesticides is quite high so that the farmers may get good quality of pesticides and they are not made to suffer a loss. If spurious, adulterated and expired dated pesticides are supplied to the farmers, not only the farmers will suffer a loss but it will also damage the foodgrains worth Rs, 6,000 crore in a year. Therefore, more attention should be paid to all these things.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, while calling the attention of this House, in these words, I urge upon the Hon. Minister of Agriculture to pay special attention to it because it is a very important matter.

DR. G.S. RAJHANS (Jhanjharpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the importance of pesticides cannot be ignored in any condition. It is correct that even today the foodgrains worth Rs. 6,000 crore goes waste in our country for want of pesticides. I am grateful to the Hon. Speaker, Mr. Balram Jakhar who raised this issue on 3rd August in this House which attracted the attention of the entire country. It is not a matter which concerns Punjab alone but the entire country. Today, we have a great concern about Punjab because of the President's Rule there had because of that, Government is directly responsible for it. Besides Punjab, in many other States, the sub-standard pesticides, insecticides, fertilizers and seeds are being supplied to the people.

Shri Bairagiji has stated that Madhya Pradesh is also one of such States.

Though Hon. Minister has rightly stated but perhaps he must not be knowing that other States also have been facing the same problem. In Ganganagar, a farmer used pesticides and his crop worth Rs. 5.6 lakh got damaged. I request to the Hon. Minister to pay special attention to it because adulterated pesticides have also caused damage at several other places in Punjab. It is not appropriate to say that it was only 25 days after the expiry date of pesticides that farmers were given pesticides at lower rate in Punjab. Everybody knows, it is very harmful to use the pesticides or the drugs for human consumption of which the expiry date is already over. In our childhood we used to hear that a time will come when even the pure poison will not be available. It seems, that time has arrived now.

A perusal of the newspapers of the last one year will indicate to the Hon. Minister as to how large a quantity of adulterated pesticides, insecticides and fertilizers was supplied to the farmers.

Everybody is aware of the great loss Bihar suffered last year due to floods but

adulterated pesticides were supplied to the farmers when they started their sowing operations after floods. This I can say with full responsibility because Bihar is such a State about which if something wrong comes to fore, the people take it for granted. After flood, we were very happy and expecting a very rich crop in winter and had a hope that the poor will be able to earn their livelihood with this mango crop. but 90 per cent of the mango crop in the rural areas got damaged due to adulterated insecticides and pesticides. I want to know if there is anybody to find out the reasons ?

When we go to the villages, the farmers complain to us of the spurious insecticides. We ask them to give its proof but how the poor will prove it ? Suppose, a person complains of the adulterated milk after consuming it and if he is asked to prove it, how will he prove it when he has already consumed it. Similarly, he has already consumed the pesticides supplied to him but how will he prove its adulteration. One person may tell a lie, even two, ten and hundred persons may tell a lie but thousands and lakhs of people cannot tell a lie. Therefore an enquiry should be instituted to find out the quantity of adulterated pesticides supplied to the farmers after the last floods in Bihar. I am not talking only of the insecticides and pesticides. But also in regard to the fertilizers, I want to request to the Government to enquire and find out the quantity of spurious and adulterated fertilisers supplied to the farmers after flood in Bihar. My submission is that 95 per cent of farmers have been supplied adulterated fertilizers and soil has been given to them in the name of fertilizers. There is no other proof of it. The Government will be apprised of the whole situation if it goes through the news papers of Bihar for the last one year. You may say that the Central Government has discharged its responsibility as it has referred the matter to the State Government. The State Government will simply reply that they are looking into the matter. But you see that the poor farmers have suffered a monetary loss There should be some justice for them at least in some matters. Our Hon. Minister is justice loving. I would request him to go deep into this matter and find out the truth. It is well

known that a Mafia is working behind it. The persons howsoever big they are, if found guilty of distributing adulterated fertilizers to the poor farmers should be given most severe punishment and they should not be spared. Only then the people will have their faith in the Government. If the Government ignores this matter simply by saying that the seeds of sub-standard quality were supplied to the farmers, it will serve no purpose. I want to tell you that whosoever used these seeds was ruined as the seeds did not grow and resultantly there was no crop.

Today, there is social tension in Bihar. One of its reason is that the vested interests are cheating the poor and if this malpractice is not stopped either by the Government or by the people, who else will stop it ? The responsibility of the centre doesn't end here simply with the issuing of instructions to the State Governments for preventive measures. The Centre should send a team there to find out the facts. The pesticides and insecticides being supplied by the multinational companies have been banned in U.S.A. and in other countries but the same are being supplied to India. Will somebody look to it ?

Many such cases of death due to the use of adulterated pesticides have been registered in All India Institute of Medical Sciences. Several News Papers have brought out Editorials omit. The Government should take note of it.

There is such a machinery in this world by which one can examine the genuineness of the seed. The Government should import such machines. The situation can be improved if some guilty persons are punished. Our Hon. Minister is very capable. I would request him to listen to those poor farmers who cannot raise their voice and who have no means to bring their grievances to the notice of the Central Government. Chandigarh and Punjab are quite near from Delhi and that is why the Central Government took note of the plight of the farmers of Punjab only when Hon. Speaker raised his voice in this regard. You do not pay any attention to the farmers of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. Therefore, I request you to pay special attention to them and find

[Dr. G. S. Rajhans]

out the facts in this regard. The Government must take some decision so that the farmers may get at least unadulterated things.

SHRI HARISH RAWAT (Almora) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Hon. Minister has stated in his reply that the Government is fully committed to safeguard the interests of the farmers by making available quality pesticides/insecticides to them. I hope that the Government is not only committed, but is also bent upon to fulfil this task. However, the situation cannot be remedied only through display of determination and commitment.

The people dealing in pesticides have got their own vested interests and therefore, they are bent upon selling their sub-standard pesticide and sub-standard fertilisers. The Government has enacted Insecticides Act, 1968 to check all these malpractices. The Act is not being properly enforced in the country. A little while ago, Shri Rajhans referred to Bihar and when I rose to speak Shri Balkavi Bairagiji asked me to refer to Madhya Pradesh also. I think all over the country, even in remote areas like Arunachal Pradesh and in my own constituency, pesticides are being sold. The farther the areas more is the adulteration and malpractice. The Hon. Minister is requested to furnish the complete information regarding the number of persons against whom action has been taken under the Insecticides Act, 1968? I would also like to know the details of the action taken against such persons. If the Hon. Minister is unable to furnish the details right now, then he may ask the officials of his Ministry to get the information collected from the States, only their will be able to see the clear picture and know how ineffective the Insecticides Act, 1968 is. As a matter of suggestion I would like to request the Hon. Minister to make the similar punitive action provisions under the Insecticides Act, 1968, as has been made under the Food Adulteration Act and the Essential Commodities Act. Suppose, at present somebody is engaged in malpractices of selling adulterated fertilisers or insecticides whose expiry date is over and later on found guilty on investigation and sent to jail for few days or

forced to pay fine by the court after two-three years, then it is not a deterrent punishment. He has earned thousands of rupees during this period. The people indulging in these things are shameless and to them imprisonment of 5-10 days is meaningless. Therefore, I would like to request the Hon. Minister to make the provision for cancelling the licence in the event of offence being committed for the first time and punitive provisions should be made more stringent. In the event of licence in the name of husband being cancelled for the offence of malpractice, the licences in the name of wife and relatives should not be issued to such persons as suggested by Bairagiji. I express my approval to the suggestion made by Shri Bairagi.

As stated by Ramoowaliaji, a number of such pesticides are being sold in our country whose sale has been banned both in the developed as well as the developing countries and even in Africa. But many multinational companies have been permitted to sell these pesticides within India. You are requested to get the matter enquired as to which are the pesticides and in what circumstances their sale has been allowed to multinationals. Are these pesticides absolutely necessary and are there no substitutes to them? Investigation should also be done in the light of the findings of the study conducted by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences. Incidence of diseases due to the application of spurious pesticides is on the rise in North Indian States of Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan. The patients are being treated with great difficulty at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences. According to the Doctors treating the patients at the Institute, the incidences are on the increase due to more and more application of these pesticides. This has been stated not only by the Hon. Members but also by Dr. Rolhan of the Planning Commission. This he has stated not once but several times. There is the need to conduct a study in the matter towards which the attention of the Government has been drawn. I would like to request the Hon. Minister to look into the circumstances under which multinationals have been allowed to sell these pesticides in India. Is there any substitute available

to these? If yes, then why not substitutes are made available to the farmers and multi-nationals prevented from playing with the lives of the farmers of our country? The Hon. Minister must should look into these things.

Sir, today you have stated that a committee has been set up to examine the quality of the pesticides being used in Punjab. This is really very good and I would like to thank the Hon. Minister and the officials of the Ministry for this. The Hon. Minister also deserves congratulations for being very prompt in taking action on the complaint made by Shri Ramoowalia.

When such a committee has been set up in Punjab then why does not the Government form such committees in each state to study the environment and the requirements of the state and submit their report to the Ministry for evaluation. These will be of help to the Ministry in arranging the supplies of pesticides in the States.

I would like to state here on the floor of the House that 37 laboratories have been set up in the country. Of these 3 laboratories have been set up in Uttar Pradesh which are quite inadequate, 2 in Haryana and 3 in Punjab. Therefore, I would like to know the attitude of the Government regarding setting up of more laboratories in the country.

At the same time testing of the samples sent by farmers should be made free of charge and the report should be made available to them within the stipulated period of time. My another suggestion is that the arrangements for the training to the farmers should also be made as they are not aware of the application requirements of the pesticides. So they should be trained by sending teams of the specialists to the agricultural fairs or otherwise. The Government must look into this thing.

[English]

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA (Balasore): Hon. Chairman, Sir, I am very grateful to you and particularly to our Hon. Speaker

that he has given the opportunity to speak on this issue which is a burning problem of millions of farmers of our country.

I am grateful to the Hon. Minister for giving a very elaborate statement about the action taken by the Government. In the 9th paragraph he has stated that "need for stricter enforcement of quality control measures has been stressed upon the State Governments from time to time." Sir, may I know from the Hon. Minister whether there is any provision in the Act like in the Drugs and Cosmetics Control Act, that the Drug Inspector can collect samples *suo moto* and send to the laboratory when they filed complaints against the defaulters. I want to know whether such a provision is there or not. If so, how many State Governments utilise it and how many such samples are *suo moto* collected and sent to the laboratory for test and their results for the last two years.

Sir, a survey was conducted by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific and the U.N. Development Programme have reported that in 1985 alone Asian countries marketed Rs. 81.189 million worth of pesticides of which, as our Hon. friend Mr. Ramoowalia has already told 26 per cent of the total pesticides is being consumed by our country. So, 18 Asian countries like us have some legislative on this issue to control these pesticides etc. But the frame work does not guarantee control as enforcement is often lacking, as opined by the ESCAP organisation. In such a situation may I know the position of our country and the effective implementation of the Act? I am not telling that the Act is there. But I am telling about the effective implementation of the Act, specially when our country is the maximum user of pesticides in Asian countries.

13 hrs.

My Hon. friends have said about multi-nationals. I have got a list of 24 such multi-nations who are producing pesticides in private sector. May I urge upon the Government, the Hon. Minister to look to this aspect and see whether pesticides can be produced in public undertakings, either as joint venture with the State Government

[Shri Chintamani Jena]

or by the Centre themselves. This aspect] may kindly be examined and also this type of exploitation by the multi-nationals stopped.

My Hon. friend Mr. Rawat and Mr. Ramoowaliaji have told that many pesticides like Endrin, Aldrin, BHC, DDT etc., which are commonly used by us are banned in U.K., U.S.A., and other developed countries. This type of exploitation can be checked, if we can have our own arrangement of production of pesticides in public sector.

The UNESCAP also recommended to provide training and enhance individual and public awareness about the environment aspect of pesticides production, marketing among those who are using pesticides. May I know what action has been taken till now to provide training and to help some States so that public awareness can be created. Training in this direction is absolutely needed, at least for farmers, plant managers, dealers and medical personnel. On this issue, what action the Government has taken. Similarly, for public awareness, campaign should also be there to improve the safety and efficient use of pesticides at the farmers' level. We know that our farmers are mostly from poorer class and are illiterate. My humble submission would be that some model communication system through pamphlets, slogans, posters and TV and Radio broadcast should be provided to educate about the safety and efficient use and good effect of these pesticides.

The experts who attended a 3-day National Seminar held in June this year, on a Changing Pest Situation in the Current Agricultural Scenario, recommended scientific management of crop pests to sustain agricultural production. They have recommended to counter developed-resistance to pesticides and insecticides, biological control measure and integrated pest management system in keeping with the need of protecting environment and avoid pollution. Though the experts had recommended this since long, what action has been taken on this issue. (*Interruptions.*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: You please put questions to the Minister so that the Minister will reply.

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA: These are all special points which are not covered by my Hon. friend.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Put the question based on that.

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA: Besides, the Seminar recommended strengthening of the infrastructure involving monitoring, survey and surveillance of pest and insects, specifying various agro-climatic zones in the country.

Our Hon. Minister who is sitting and you, Mr. Chairman, are all farmers. You know very well the crops which are grown. In some areas, cotton is grown but in some areas, there is no such crop as cotton. They have recommended that considering the agro-climatic condition of the area, the country should be divided into some zones where specific measures would be taken for these crops which are abruptly grown there and which are affected by pests. Similarly, plant guarantee and identification also need to be strengthened not only to check migration of pests from other parts of the world but also to regulate movement of infected seeds and also planting material within the country. They have also recommended the setting up of plant health clinics in all States wherever Agriculture Universities or Research Institutes of ICAR are located.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude. Please put the question.

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA: This is a very vital point. My humble submission would be...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not your submission but your question.

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA: In this connection, may I know from the Hon. Minister what action has been taken in this direction?

I would like to quote one instance. Only yesterday, there was a question from

my side, Question No. 3221 but, to my misfortune, it was an unstarred question in which I have asked whether a large number of snails in the fruit and vegetable gardens destroyed fruits and vegetable cultivation in certain parts of Orissa and, if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to check the spreading of snails to save the cultivation.

MR. CHAIRMAN : That has nothing to do with pesticides.

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA : This is what you say.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please confine to Call Attention. Please put the question and confine to Call Attention.

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA : I am confining to Call Attention.

MR. CHAIRMAN : What is the question? Please confine yourself to the Call Attention.

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA : Though the Hon. Minister has replied in the affirmative but no action has been taken by the State Government of Orissa to check these spreading of snails.

I am not going down to bring the debate to a personal level. I am only citing one example. I will not speak against anyone nor held anyone guilty.

This is the packet of insecticide 'Furadan' which is used to check stem-bore attack on plants. I had purchased it for Rs. 32/-. The date of expiry given on the packet is the year 1990. I had used it two or three times but without any result or effect.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Why not you write to the Hon. Minister about these things? The Hon. Member has mentioned it. That is enough. Please write to the Hon. Minister for details.

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA : All right.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Only 5 minutes are given to you but you have taken 15 minutes.

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA : One horticulturist has recommended its use but it is not giving any effect. After examining this, he came to the conclusion that actually there is no effect in this medicine. There is no point in using it. Such things are going on. Therefore, I would request the Hon. Ministers—there are three capable Ministers now—to look into this matter and help the poor farmers who are crying because of these problems.

With these words, I conclude.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BHAJAN LAL) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, Shri Balwant Singh Ramoowalia has drawn the attention of the House toward an important issue. It will not be good on the part of the Government if it fails to provide quality seeds, fertilisers and insecticides timely, because farmers are the backbone of the nation. It has been the constant endeavour of the Government to make available agricultural inputs, water, electricity at appropriate prices for the produce to the farmers. Despite all precautions such complaints are also often made, because majority of the fertilisers in the country are marketed and produced by the private people and private companies. Insecticides in small quantity are produced by the Government agencies. There are no two opinions about the bungling practiced by the private businessmen engaged in the sale of insecticides as only small quantities are sold by the State Governments. The Government of India, at least thrice in a year, invites the attention of the State Government for issuing instructions regarding monitoring the quality of pesticides through surprise checks in a bid to provide quality inputs to the farmers. In this connection references are made and the meetings are also held. As regard the matter raised by Shri Ramoowalia which was published in the Tribune that a particular pesticide was continuously sold for 25 days even after the date of expiry was over. I would like to say that it is very bad. The pesticides should not be sold

[Shri Bhajan Lal]

even after one day the date of expiry is over otherwise there is no sense in fixing the date of expiry. Pesticides do not remain totally effective. These pesticides were not sold by any private businessman, but by the Agriculture Department of the Punjab Government at a price Rs. 176 for the benefit of the farmers whose price in the open market is Rs. 232. The additional chief secretary of the Punjab Government Shri Gill is also looking after the Agriculture Department. We made a contact and he issued instructions stopping the sale. Nearly two thousand litres of pesticides have been taken into custody by him. The Hon. Member has rightly stated that the application of this particular pesticide should be reduced to minimum. In the Eighth Five Year plan the Government proposes to supply to the farmers disease resistance quality seeds by raising their output, because weak people are easily susceptible to the diseases.

The I.C.A.R. has been doing very good work. They have done good research work and produced good quality seeds with lesser chances of contracting diseases. It is not correct, as you have said, that it is being used in the maximum quantity in India. I can give you figures. In the U.S.A. it is used 618 kilogram per hectare. In Japan it is 9.721 kilogram per hectare and in Britain, it is 8.311 kilogram per hectare. But in India it is used 0.297 kilogram is a quarter of a kilogram per hectare. We have stopped importing these pesticides which are causing harm. There have been complaints that people consumed these pesticides following a minor quarrel in their household. We have totally stopped the import of these pesticides so that these pesticides may not cause any harm to our health. We keep foodgrain either in bags or in loose form in the rooms and spray pesticides on them as a result of which it causes more harm. We have, therefore, tried to use them in the minimum quantity so that they may not cause any harm to our health. Shri Rawat desired to know as to how many persons have been punished and what action has been taken under this Act. In reply to that, I would like to say that a total of 241 cases had been filed in courts in 1986-87. Of them, judgement was given in 51 cases and punishment was awarded in 38 cases. In the year 1987-88, a total of 127 cases had been filed in the courts and punishment

was awarded in 15 cases. Last year, in 1987-88 we took 33134 samples throughout the country and out of them, test was conducted on 29251 samples. Of these, 28187 samples were found upto mark and in case of 1064 samples, the presence of pesticide was much less than the required one. It was 3.6 less. We took action wherever it was found less. The Act provides for the cancellation and suspension of licence, and imprisonment for 3 to 6 months. We have made the law so stringent that no one can dare play with the life of the people and the people may not get the supply of sub-standard pesticides. We have so arranged that people may get the pesticides of good quality which will increase production in the country. The committees, as has been said by Shri Ramoowalia, should have been constituted much earlier in all the States.....

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA : The committees were constituted after you asked for it over the telephone.

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : It is all right that we constituted the committees later. We will see that such committees are constituted in all the States with the Vice-chancellors of the universities as their members so that we could exercise proper check on the quality of these pesticides and nobody dared to sell sub-standard pesticides and such pesticides whose date of expiry has already been over, by fixing wrong labels on the packs.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA : Fertilisers should also be covered under it.

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : We will cover everything. So far as the fertilisers are concerned, we have already given all the powers to the State Governments. The Government of India also can take samples and in fact we have taken some samples. But we do not have that much of staff to undertake this task. It is a state subject and 99 per cent samples have been taken in the states only. In this connection action has also been taken against the defaulters in the states. We will see that such committees are formed throughout the country so that it could be completely checked in future.

You have made a mention of the consumption of fertilisers and also complained that injustice is meted out to the farmers. But the Government had no such intention. We never thrust sub-standard goods on anybody.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOO-WALIA : I did not accuse the Government. I was just talking of the tendency.

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : You are perfectly right in saying that nobody should be given sub-standard things. The shop-keepers say that if no customer comes to purchase these sub-standard items, the farmers will come to purchase it.

Dr. G.S. Rajhans has stated that food-grains worth Rs. 6000 crores is got damaged in his state. He also referred to the 'Vyapar' or 'Vyavhar' of pesticides in Ganganagar. But it was not 'Vyavhar' because this word is used for business. Perhaps you meant to say the word 'use'. They have used it for spray. As a matter of fact, the Hon. Speaker had also said this thing yesterday and we have asked our officers to conduct an enquiry. This village is situated 100 kilometers away from Ganganagar and road communication to this village is also not good. Even then we expect a report from that village to-night. I have already ordered that samples may be taken from the company from where this pesticide was purchased and if the company is found guilty, action will be taken against it. Perhaps, the headquarters of the company is at Delhi. We have also directed that samples may also be taken from that office and most stringent action may be taken against the company if found guilty.

He has also said that good quality fertilisers are not available in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, but it is not so. We also take the samples of fertilisers from time to time. If he has any complaint about any particular area, let him tell us, we will take samples, hold an enquiry and take appropriate action on it. So far as the consumption of fertilisers is concerned, it is far less as compared to the other countries. We will have to increase consumption of fertilisers. Whereas in other countries the rate of consumption

of fertilisers is 300 to 400 kilograms per hectare, in our country it is only 49 kilograms on an average and that too due to the consumption in Punjab being as high as 159 kilogram. The rate of consumption in Haryana, Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh is also good and the average consumption in the whole country comes to this proportion only because of higher rate of consumption in these states. Our production will not increase further until and unless we raise the rate of consumption of fertilisers. Shri Chintamani Jena made a mention of samples and said that the rate of consumption is less in other countries and more in our country. It is true. As it is, I have tried my best to reply all the questions. Even then we will give a serious consideration to the various suggestions made by you. The Government has all along been trying to provide good seeds and good quality fertilisers to the farmers. Anybody if found guilty, howsoever big he may be, will not be allowed to go scot free by the Government. I would like to assure the House that nobody will be allowed to play with the life of the farmers.

13.25 hrs.

Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Bill

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI A. K. PANJA) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for detention in certain cases for the purpose of preventing illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and for matters connected therewith.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for detention in certain cases for the purpose of preventing illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and for matters connected therewith."

The motion was adopted