

LOK SABHA DEBATES

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LOK SABHA

Monday, March 25, 1985/Chaitra 4, 1907
(Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[*English*]

Higher Allocation for Housing in Annual Plans

*161. PROF. P. J. KURIEN : Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a proposal to allocate a higher share for "Housing" in the annual plans by redetermining the priority; and

(b) the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI ABDUL GHAFOOR) :

(a) The need for assigning higher priority for housing has been recognised.

(b) It is not possible to indicate details as the outlays for the Seventh Five Year Plan are yet to be finalised.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN : I am happy that the Minister has recognised the need for a higher outlay in the housing sector. Housing problem is a problem of gigantic proportions. We have to provide houses to lakhs and lakhs of slum-dwellers, the rural houseless, the urban houseless and also people who are landless in the rural areas. I know it is not a central subject; it is a State subject. LIC is giving assistance. Banks are giving assistance. Some of the State governments are also doing it in a large measure. But, in spite of all this, it is a fact that the number of houseless families in the country is on the increase every year. I

would like to know from the Minister whether he has got an estimate of this number of increase of houseless families every year and also the total number of houseless in this country and since the number is on the increase—at the end of the Seventh Plan we will have a large number of houseless people and the problem is of a gigantic magnitude—does he envisage a suitable Plan outlay considering all this projected number of houseless families in the Seventh Plan and has he got a time-bound programme to tackle this gigantic problem ?

SHRI ABDUL GHAFOOR : Yes, housing is a gigantic problem, no doubt, but it does not mean that it can be solved by the Government alone. With regard to the Seventh Five Year Plan, so far from this side is concerned, we have pressed for higher outlays. But I am not yet in a position to say how much money they will allot for this particular sector.

So far as the question of housing shortage in India is concerned, an estimate was made in the year 1981 and according to that estimate, 21 million housing units were needed in India in the year 1981. Out of that 16 million are in rural areas and 5 or 6 million are in urban areas. Whatever the hon. Member has stated no doubt is a very gigantic problem, but you know the Seventh Five Year Plan allocations are not yet out. So I am not in a position to say how much money they will allot. We have asked for more money taking into account all these difficulties. In the Sixth Five Year Plans Rs. 1491 crores were allotted but we are asking for Rs. 8425 crores but how much they will give in the Seventh Five Year Plan I do not know. After that we will see how much problem is solved and how much remains.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN : I am happy that the Minister has understood the magnitude of the problem and he is at it. But is he aware that in all the schemes of providing houses for the houseless, there is no scheme to provide house-sites for the landless. Unless there are house-sites, you cannot construct even a hut and especially in States like

Kerala, acquiring house-sites is very difficult because prices of land are very high.

I know it is included in the 20-point programme. Kerala government has asked for special assistance from the Centre for providing house sites to the houseless. I would like to know the reaction of the Central Government to this request. Further, the subsidy you are giving for house construction in the rural areas is only Rs. 500. The Planning Commission has also accepted that this subsidy of Rs. 500 is not enough in the present conditions. Is there any proposal to increase this subsidy?

SHRI ABDUL GHAFOOR : In the Sixth Plan direct public sector assistance was provided for housing economically weaker sections of the society. It is not that from the Centre no assistance was given to those persons who had get no land.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN : For providing house sites.

SHRI ABDUL GHAFOOR : Even for that money is allocated to the States and it is for the States to cater to the needs of these people. Centre cannot go and construct houses in all the States.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN : What about increasing the subsidy limit?

SHRI ABDUL GHAFOOR : So far as the question of raising the assistance is concerned it will be considered keeping in view the rise in prices in each field of activity. Your suggestion has been noted and it will be considered.

SHRI A. CHARLES : Sir, in continuation of what has been asked by Prof. Kurien, I would like to say that the question of providing houses to the landless is the most serious problem facing our Kerala State. I talked to the Minister of Housing in Kerala and requested him to chalk out scheme for providing houses to the landless. I was told that no schemes were available in the State or Centre for providing houses to the landless. There are two sections of people in Kerala—people living in slums and the people living in coastal areas. Since it is not possible to provide land I would like that the possibility of building flats for such people be gone into. I would request the hon. Minister to give specific direction to the State government.

MR. SPEAKER : Please be brief and put a pointed question.

SHRI A. CHARLES : Is there any scheme for landless people in the coastal areas?

SHRI ABDUL GHAFOOR : I have got figures in respect of almost all the States. As far as Kerala is concerned I will pass on the figures to the hon. Member.

SHRI R. P. DAS : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister that there are still problems for housing under Housing and Urban Programmes for economically weaker and low income groups. In spite of the implementation of these programmes, the housing problem has become acute in the urban areas, metropolitan cities and down in the district headquarters. I would like to know how much amount has already been spent on these programmes in the current year and how much has been allocated for the following year.

SHRI ABDUL GHAFOOR : There are schemes for housing for economically weaker sections, low income group, middle income group, higher income group and the workers engaged in different public undertakings.

SHRI R. P. DAS : I would like to know how much amount has been allotted to HUDCO for housing purposes for the economically weaker sections and low income groups.

SHRI ABDUL GHAFOOR : The HUDCO Scheme is mainly for weaker sections. About 80% of the units are meant for weaker sections for which money is allotted and 20% for others.

SHRIMATI PHULRENU GUHA : I would like to know from the hon. Minister what is the proportion of money allotted to the rural people as a whole, and what is the proportion of money out of that allotted for the rural homeless people.

SHRI ABDUL GHAFOOR : I will collect the information and let you have.

[*Translation*]

SHRIMATI KRISHNA SHAHI : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has stated that there was shortage of 24 million dwelling units in 1981, out of which 16 million units were required in rural areas. I

would like to ask the hon. Minister whether keeping in view the regional economic imbalances in our country and the poverty of most of the people living in the countryside which is one of the reasons of this regional imbalance, any direction or guidance would be given by the Central Government to State Governments asking them to provide dwelling units to the poor in an equitable manner in rural areas so that regional imbalances could be reduced.

SHRI ABDUL GHAFUOR : You are aware of the fact that it has been clearly stated in our 20-point programme that the weakest section of our society should be given help for construction of houses. Similarly in all the States of the country, the highest priority has been given for providing help to Harijans and the people belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. For the upliftment of such people, some work has been done in your Bihar State and in your area.....

SHRIMATI KRISHNA SHAHI : What you are saying is based on caste consideration where as my question is based on economic consideration. I am asking what the policy of the Government regarding reducing the regional imbalances is.

SHRI ABDUL GHAFUOR : This is a question on which all the hon. Members will differ as to what should be the economic base for different people. As we see in the villages, even the poorest man has a hut or shelter to live in. If you want that his hut should be made pucca, then there is no such plan before the Government, but so far as providing the minimum shelter is concerned, we are extending help for that. You have raised the question regarding improvement in the economic condition of the people. You are aware that we are preparing our plans keeping this in view and all our efforts are directed towards that end.

[*English*]

Shortage of Vanaspati in the Country

*162. **SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK :** Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been acute shortage of vanaspati ghee and edible oils in various parts of the country, particularly in the hilly

regions and Adivasi areas in the country;

(b) if so, the names of such places where these articles are not available even through fair price shops; and

(c) what steps are being taken by Government for the proper distribution of vanaspati ghee and edible oils to the backward areas and Adivasi areas of the country ?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (RAO BIRENDRA SINGH) :

(a) and (b). No specific instance of shortage of vanaspati and edible oils in the country particularly in the hilly regions and adivasi areas has come to the notice of the Government. Presently, the availability of vanaspati and edible oil is by and large satisfactory throughout the country. However, temporary shortages of localised nature cannot be ruled out.

(c) There is no centralised control on the distribution of vanaspati. However, the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations have been advised that they can procure about 30% of vanaspati produced by vanaspati units within their respective jurisdiction for sale through State Government nominees or through Public Distribution System. There being keen competition amongst producers, vanaspati is being pushed to even remote areas of the country. Apart from this, imported oil is being allotted to the State Government/Union Territory Administrations for sale through Fair Price Shops including those in far-flung places in rural areas.

SHRI DHARM PAL SINGH MALIK : May know from the hon. Minister whether there is any proposal by the Government to set up new units to produce vanaspati ghee or edible oils in cooperatives or private sector, and if so, is there any plan to set up such units in Haryana ?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : We have a policy of giving licences for new units and under the existing policy, priority is given to public sector undertakings as number one, then joint sector undertakings and then to cooperatives. In backward and no industry districts, if these other organisations do not come forward, then private applicants can also be considered.

PROF N. G. RANGA : Licences are