

into it. Will the hon. Minister at least formulate a definite policy and state before this House that he will come forth with a solution at least within 2 years?

MR. SPEAKER: Much earlier.

DR. PRATAP CHANDRA CHUNDER: Sir, again that will depend on the definition of the expression 'national policy'. As far as I know, earlier also the policy was debated by the Kothari Commission which had taken the views of different people from different parts of the country. Then the policy was placed before Parliament and a Committee of Parliament was set up. Certainly Parliament represents the nation and ultimately this Parliament adopted the National Policy in 1968. Here again we are trying to involve this Parliament which represents the nation. Therefore, it will be a national policy.

Revised formula for monthly release of Sugar

*297. SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether South Indian Sugar Mills Association has suggested a revised formula for monthly release of sugar; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction to it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH): (a) The South Indian Sugar Mills Association made a representation to the Government on 19th January, 1979 pointing out the difficulties of the sugar industry and urging the Government to regulate the release of sugar from the factories.

(b) Control on the monthly releases of sugar was removed on 16th August, 1978 as a part of decontrol. The Gov-

ernment are however closely watching the production, prices and distribution of sugar. No major change in the Government's policy of decontrol is contemplated at present.

SHRI RAM GOPAL REDDY: Sir, the Minister said, the Government is watching. What he has watched? Can he say something about what he has exactly watched?

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: For one thing we are watching that the price of sugar does not go up in the market. Secondly, we are watching that the growers get the price for their cane. So, these are the two main watchings that we are doing protecting the interests of the consumers and protecting the interests of the growers.

SHRI RAM GOPAL REDDY: Sir, one thing he has forgotten to mention here and that is that the price of sugar is becoming uneconomic and. I am afraid...

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: The canvassing business in the House is prohibited. He is connected with sugar. He should not....

(Interruptions).

SHRI RAM GOPAL REDDY: I am more connected with CPI(M), not with sugar.

MR. SPEAKER: When did you do that? I have to change your seat!

SHRI RAM GOPAL REDDY: I am more concerned—not connected—with CPI(M).

Sir, already more than 60 per cent of the sugar factories—even modern factories—are going into debt and I am afraid all these factories may become sick factories. I would like to know whether the Government also see that the sugar is sold at economic price.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYA: How many factories you have?

(Interruptions).

SHRI RAM GOPAL REDDY: I am having 635 factories. As many factories as the Minister is having I am having.

Now, the cut-throat competition is there. The weaker units in the sugar industry may go into liquidation and it will be a botheration to the Minister. The Minister has given several concessions so far. In spite of that, the sick units are not able to make any profit. I want to know whether the Minister will see that sugar is sold at an economic price. Let there not be cut-throat competition. I am not asking him to impose any control, but only control the releases of sugar. I would like to know if there is more sugar whether he is going to export some sugar or he is going to make a buffer stock of 10 lakhs tonnes as he has assured the House and the nation earlier.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: After de-control we are not trying to regulate the prices, so long as the consumer continues to get it below Rs. 2.75 per kilo. Below that level, they are free to sell their sugar at any price and the question of any intervention on our part does not arise. The Government desires that the sugar industry should learn to survive on its own devices instead of trying to survive on artificial props as it has hitherto been doing.

SHRI ANNASAHAB GOTKHINDE: It was said about Nero that he was fiddling while Rome was burning. Since decontrol was introduced in August last year, we are getting the answers that the Government is watching the situation. No doubt the Government has taken certain steps to ensure the viability of the sugar industry. But even today, after the taking over of the management of some sugar mills, there are so many sugar mills in the country which are not able to pay sugarcane dues to the

cane growers. Because of the present level of sugar prices, the sugar mills are not in a position to pay the cane growers the prices that are determined by the Government. What steps have been taken by the Government to ensure these things?

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: As I have said earlier, the Government is only watching the interest of the producers and the consumers. So long as the producers get the price fixed for them and so long as the consumers get their sugar at a price lower than Rs. 2.75 a kilo, the Government does not propose to intervene in the pricing of sugar. The Government is not forcing the industry to sell their produce at any fixed rate. It is upto them to regulate their sales.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBIAH: The hon. Minister is the champion of the agriculturists, especially the sugarcane growers. He comes from a State where a majority of the sugar mills are sick. The cane growers are not paid remunerative prices and the private owners of the sick mills have earned enormous profits. I would like to know whether a golden mean is adopted, that the consumers and the producers should not be hit by the policy of the Government. But here the producers are pitted against the consumers and the consumers are pitted against the producers with the result there is a danger of many sugar mills being closed and also new sugar mills, coming up in cooperative sector especially, many of them, could not proceed with the construction work because the financial institutions have refused to finance them. They have sunk a large amount in cooperative sector for getting the sugar mills constructed. I would like to know whether, in order to maintain a sort of parity and giving remunerative prices to the cane growers, the Government proposes to explore the export market so that sugar can be released. There are sixty lakhs tonnes of sugar lying unutilised. I would like to know whether the Government

proposes to give a boost to exports so as to see that the cane growers and the consumers are benefited by the policy of the Government.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH:

We are exporting the full quota allotted to India under the International Sugar Agreement viz., 6.5 lakh tonnes and that we are doing at a considerable loss to the public exchequer. The demand for sugar in the international market is low and hence the price also is very low. Beyond 6.5 lakh tonnes of sugar that we have already decided to export, the Government is not considering further export of sugar.

SHRI K. S. VEERABHADRAPPA:

After decontrol, the sugarcane growers are not getting a better price for their produce. The mills are not paying a proper price. I want to know whether the Government is helping the mills to pay a proper price for the sugarcane. People say that wood is much costlier than cane. That is the position. After de-control, the agriculturists are facing hardships. I would like to know how the Government is going to ensure that cane growers get proper price for their produce.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: Proper price for sugarcane has been fixed. At the minimum statutory price every factory will have to pay that price in any case.

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: Since the Government has fixed the price of the sugar-cane, the price of the cane should have some relationship with the price of the sugar. Today the price of the cane, the production cost and the Central excise, all come to Rs. 235 to Rs. 240 per quintal of sugar. Whereas in the open market, it is Rs. 220 for each quintal. The sugar factories are losing nearly Rs. 25 to Rs. 30 per quintal. So, what is the remedy for this? Do you want most of the factories in the co-oprative sector? Everybody they are losing lakhs of rupees. Ultimately every factory will be losing crores of rupees. What is the measure that the Govern-

ment is thinking of taking to avert this crisis? The crisis is not in the sugar industry but the Government has to take immediate action to avert this crisis.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH:

The question referred to by the hon. Member is due to the cut-throat competition amongst sugar factories themselves and the Government has not proposed to do anything about that. But I may inform the House that sugar industry seems to have learnt this lesson that they are regulating their sales in a way so that the price may slightly go up and that has already happened to some extent.

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 298—The Member is absent. Q. No. 299 Absent.

Apex body for administration of mountaineering Institutes

*300. **SHRI RAMESHWAR PATI-DAR:** Will the Minister of EDUCATION, SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there was a proposal under Education Ministry to create an apex body to look after the administration of all Mountaineering Institute in the country; and

(b) if so, reasons why it is not being done and the difficulties for doing so?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE (DR. PRATAP CHANDRA CHUNDER): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

श्री रामेश्वर पाटीदार : प्रधान महोदय देश की सभी पर्वतारोहण संस्थाओं ने प्रशासन क दृष्टि से अपने अलग अलग रुल्स बना रखे हैं, और जैसा कि रोज अखबारों में भी आया है कि हर जग अष्टाचार की काफी शिकायतें आती हैं। तो क्या सरकार इस बारे में विचार कर रही है कि प्रशासन की दृष्टि से सभी इंस्टीट्यूशन्स पर नजर रखने के लिए कोई ऐपेक्स बोडी बनायेगी ? सरकार ने उत्तर दिया है कि वह ऐसा विचार नहीं कर रही