

pleased to state whether he is willing to allot some more stock to Karnataka so far as wheat is concerned?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : I have already stated that the full requirement of the mills according to their capacity has been allotted. In the past, there might have been some slow movement of stocks on account of accidents on the Railways. May be due to that reason, the monthly allotment might not have reached the State. But as I have said there is enough food stock in Karnataka itself. Therefore there should be no difficulty.

Wholesale and Retail Prices of Groundnut Oil

*416. **SHRI R.P. GAEKWAD :** Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that wholesale and retail prices of groundnut oil have recently gone up to all time high;

(b) whether this hike in prices of groundnut oil is attributable to export of sizeable quantity of groundnuts from India;

(c) if so, reasons for export vis-a-vis great need to reserve it for domestic market for production of oil; and

(d) if not, factors responsible for this steady hike?

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION AND IRRIGATION AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (RAO BIRENDRA SINGH) :

(a) There had been a certain rise in the prices of groundnut oil in recent months. However, there has been decline in the prices of groundnut oil in certain important markets of the country in the last few weeks

(b) No, Sir. The quantity of groundnut being exported does not exceed even 2% of the total groundnut production.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The rise in prices was mainly attributable to a fall in the production of groundnut during the last Kharif Crop, the production performance of oilseeds in general being not commensurate with the growth in demand and the speculative nature of trade resulting in contra-seasonal bullish trend in the prices of edible oils including groundnut oil in the country.

SHRI R.P. GAEKWAD : In view of the fact that there was a shortfall in oil production in the country, why was the export not stopped totally? Secondly, though this is a State matter, has the Central Government given any directive to the State Governments to give any extra incentives to the farmers, so that there is no shortfall again in the next season?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : We have sanctioned two special projects, one for groundnut and the other for soyabean—groundnut in Gujarat and soyabean in Madhya Pradesh. For bringing larger areas under groundnut cultivation, under irrigated conditions. Rs. 35 crores have been sanctioned as special subsidies and incentives to the farmers; similarly, in the case of soyabean also. We have many other Centrally sponsored schemes to increase production of oilseeds in the country. Several States have been selected for the purpose.

SHRI R.P. GAEKWAD : Has the Government any information on any illegal trading in oil with any of our neighbouring countries and if so, what is the percentage?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : Nothing specific has come to the notice of the Government in this regard. But if the hon. Member has any specific information, we shall be glad to look into it.

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD : May I know from the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that the price hike is directly related to inefficient public distribution system which evidently lacks the requisite infrastructure to serve the needs of the vulnerable population and if so, what is the thinking of Government of India in this matter?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : The number of fair price shops has increased to nearly three lakhs in the country over the past one year. (Interruption) . This is the agency for distribution and the distribution is arranged by the State Governments. But on our part, we are meeting the entire demand of imported oil from the States for public distribution system, and there is no shortage.

श्री मलिक एम० एम० ए० खान : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय अभी मंत्री महोदय ने बताया कि आयलसीड्स की पैदावार बढ़ाने के लिए सरकार बहुत से कदम उठा रही है। मंत्री महोदय से मैं यह जानना चाहूंगा कि हमारे मुल्क में राइस ब्रान से 25 से 30 परसेंट तक आयल निकल सकता है जिसको कि गधे और घोड़े खा जाते हैं, उस में से तेल निकालने के लिए सरकार क्या कदम उठा रही है ?

दूसरे 1969-70 में एक राइस ब्रान आइल कमेटी बनायी गयी थी और उसने अपनी रिपोर्ट दी थी कि इस से तेल एक्सट्रैक्शन करने के प्लांट मुल्क में ज्यादा से ज्यादा लगाये जाएं, उस कमेटी की रिपोर्ट पर क्या कार्यवाही

की गयी ? हम अपने मुल्क में सैकड़ों करोड़ रुपये का आयल इम्पोर्ट कर रहे हैं। क्यों नहीं अब तक हम इस 1969-70 की रिपोर्ट पर कार्यवाही कर सके हैं और करोड़ों रुपये इम्पोर्ट से बचा सके हैं ?

राव वीरेन्द्र सिंह : डिप्टी स्पीकर साहब, मैं आनरेबल मेम्बर के साथ इत्तिफाक करता हूं कि राइस ब्रान से और ज्यादा तेल निकाला जा सकता है और उसे इस्तेमाल किया जा सकता है। उस के लिए हम तजवीज कर रहे हैं, प्रोजेक्ट बना रहे हैं लेकिन राइस ब्रान से एडीबल आयल निकाला जाए, उसके लिए स्पेशल टेक्नोलॉजी चाहिए।

श्री मलिक एम० एम० ए० खान : क्या आपने उस कमेटी की रिपोर्ट को एग्जामिन किया है ? (व्यवधान) मैं उस कमेटी का चेरमेन था।

SHRI NIREN GHOSH : When there was a shortfall, why did the Government of India agree to export groundnuts—whatever it is, even if it is 2%? Is it not to help the ground-nut oil lobby and to make illegal money? Is it also a fact that the Government of Gujarat and the ground-nut oil lobby entered into some sort of an unwritten contract and the ground-nut oil lobby has cornered the stocks and so the prices have reached an enormous high? You have not said what is the ruling price now. That also you should tell us.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : As I said, the export of hand-picked groundnut does not appreciably affect the market because out of a total production of 57 lakhs tonnes as is estimated for the last year, the

export has been only of the order of around 50,000 tonnes. That comes to hardly 1%. That small quantity does not make any difference in the prices.

But I would also like to say that we have to think of exports even in the agricultural sector to earn foreign exchange which is also badly needed by the country. At the same time some exports firm up the prices of the agricultural produce and it benefits the farmers. Otherwise, there will be a slump in price and production will suffer. All these things have to be considered in a balanced way.

The hon. Member wants to know about prices. I have already stated in my main reply that during the last 2-3 weeks they have tended to come down. In the main markets for groundnut that is, Hyderabad, Rajkot, Bombay and Madras and Calcutta which is not so important from the point of view of groundnut oil, in September, that was on 4th September the wholesale price per quintal of groundnut oil in Hyderabad was Rs. 1407, at Rajkot it was Rs. 1412, in Bombay it was Rs. 1469 as compared to Rs. 1470 in August in Hyderabad and Rs. 1557 in Rajkot and similar higher prices ruling in all the markets in the country and now they have come down.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH : You have not answered whether the oil was cornered by the traders.

श्री कृष्ण कुमार गोयल : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, हमारे यहां जितनी तेल की मांग है उसके मुकाबले उत्पादन बहुत कम है। मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूं कि खाद्य तेल का जो विकल्प है "पाम आयल" उसके लिए "पाम प्लांटेशन" के लिए क्या करने जा रहे हैं। हमारे देश का क्लाइमेट लगभग मलेशिया और इंडोनेशिया जैसा है। इसलिए इस बारे में क्या कार्यवाही की जा रही है, ताकि

खाद्य तेल के बारे में देश आत्मनिर्भर हो सके।

राव वीरेन्द्र सिंह : "पाम आयल प्लांटेशन" के लिए सरकार ने कदम उठाये हैं और कई जगह उसका परीक्षण किया जा रहा है।

श्री शिव कुमार सिंह ठाकुर : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहूंगा कि किसान जब भी मूंगफली लेकर बाजार में जाता है तो मूंगफली का भाव कम हो जाता है। हम पिछले तीन-चार साल से देख रहे हैं, तेल का भाव इस साल भी 16 रुपए प्रति किलो है। इस बारे में नेशनल डेरी डेवलपमेंट बोर्ड के चेयरमैन श्री कुरियन ने एक योजना आपके पास दी है, जिस से तिलहन की फसल का अधिक उत्पादन किया जा सकता है? 700 करोड़ का जो तेल बाहर के देशों से मंगाया जाता है उसको रोका जा सके, क्या ऐसी कोई योजना आपके पास है?

राव वीरेन्द्र सिंह : नेशनल डेरी डेवलपमेंट कारपोरेशन की राजेशंज भी आई है। इसके अलावा एग्रिकल्चर मिनिस्ट्री अपने आप भी बहुत सी स्कीमें बना रही है और उन के ऊपर अमल किया जा रहा है।

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, groundnut oil is particularly used for the manufacture of vegetable ghee, that is, dalda. As you know, Sir, my Constituency, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, is cut off from the other parts of the country. They use Dalda which is sent from Calcutta and Madras. What happened is this. The West Bengal Government has imposed a ban so that this particular item could not

be sent from Calcutta to Andaman and Nicobar islands. In view of this, the price of this particular item has gone up like anything.

I have even written a letter to the hon. Minister. I would like to know from him whether he would like to consider this point and issue necessary instructions in view of the Durga Puja, Diwali and other festivals which are coming shortly so that the islands may have got sufficient stocks of this particular item. Will the Minister issue necessary instructions to the concerned department of the State Government to allow this particular item to be sent to Andaman and Nicobar Islands?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : Sir, the imported edible oils are being allocated to all the States including Andaman and Nicobar Islands, according to the demands of the States. In fact, the off take has been much less in almost all the States than the allocations. So, there is no question of shortage for any State for that matter in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA. Sir, I have written a letter also. . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER :
Now, next question.

Formulation of National Drought Policy

*417. SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN :
SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL :

Will the Minister of RURAL RECONSTRUCTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have formulated a National Drought Policy to prevent repetition of drought in various states every year ;

(b) if so, details thereof ; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRIES OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (SHRI BALESHWAR RAM) : (a) Government have, with a view to containing drought and reducing its severity in areas where its incidence is more frequent, been implementing various schemes, the more important of which are the Drought Prone Areas Programme, the Desert Development Programme and the All-India Co-ordinated Research Project for Dryland Agriculture.

(b) and (c). A statement containing details of these schemes is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

Drought Prone Areas Programme

As drought has been a recurring phenomenon in some parts of the country, a Rural Works Programme was started from 1970-71 with the principal objective of gradually mitigating the severity of scarcity conditions. The drought prone areas were identified on the basis of frequency of incidence of droughts, extent of area under irrigation, rainfall, avenues of available employment etc. Initially, the objective of the Programme was to obviate emergent scarcity relief by taking up labour-intensive works such as soil conservation, afforestation, roads and irrigation works. After the mid-term appraisal of the Programme during the Fourth Plan, the Programme was modified and was called the Drought Prone Areas Programme. The approach and strategy of the Drought Prone Areas Programme was outlined by a Task Force set up by the Planning Commission in October, 1971. The Task Force suggested that the main thrust of efforts should be in the direction of restoration of proper ecological balance.