

LOK SABHA

Monday, March 20, 1972/Phalgun 30
1893 (Saka)

*The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock*

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

MEMBER SWORN

SHRI KARNEGH MARAK—Tura
(Meghalaya)

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

**Fair Price Shops for Foodgrains
in States**

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*81. SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HAL-
DER :

SHRI P. GANGADEB :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE
be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government had asked the
State Governments to open fair price
shops for distributing food grains at con-
trolled prices through a circular recently;

(b) if so, the main features thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the State Govern-
ments thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI
ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE) : (a) and (b).
During the past few months several circu-
lars were sent to State Governments advis-
ing them to strengthen and enlarge fair
price distribution of Government food-
grains at fixed price and to open more
fair price shops where necessary

(c) The State Governments have repoi-
ted to have taken necessary action.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA
HALDER I would like to know from the
Minister whether, after the opening of the
fair price shops, the price rise has been
checked or not

SHRI ANNASAHEB P SHINDE .
Marginally the price rise has been checked,
not only because of the opening of fair
price shops, but because of a number of
other measures taken by the Government
of India

SHRI P. GANGADEB In view of
the new distribution policy and in the
context of the paradoxical situation of
plenty with the rising cost of living, may
I know whether a reasonable relief will be
given to the consumer by further reducing
the controlled price of foodgrains distri-
buted through the fair price shops ?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE :
This matter is usually considered at the
Chief Ministers' conferences. We are go-
ing to have such a conference for consider-
ing the problems relating to the price
policy on rabi cereals on 8th April next
and perhaps this matter also would be
considered in that conference. Hon. mem-
bers will appreciate that this year on acco-
unt of several reasons—flood, dislocation of

transport, large-scale influx of refugees, etc.—there has been some price rise in certain parts of the country, despite a very comfortable food position.

श्री मूल चंद डागा : उचित मूल्यों पर घान्य वितरण की दूकानें नगरपालिकाओं की सीमाओं के अलावा क्या गांवों में भी खोली गई थी या नहीं और गांवों में खोलने के बाद वितरण करने का तरीका क्या था ? मेरी समझ में उचित मूल्य की दूकानें आपने गांवों में कहीं नहीं खोली, केवल शहर के इलाकों में खोलीं जहां जरूरत नहीं थी ।

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE : I appreciate that the public distribution system in the rural areas is not as strong as we desire it to be. Therefore, we have written to the State Governments from time to time to try and strengthen the public distribution system in the rural areas. But the impression of the hon. member that the fair price shops are mainly located in urban areas and not in rural areas is not quite correct. Out of the total number of 1.22 lakh fair price shops in the country, 2½ times are in the rural areas compared to urban areas.

DR. RANEN SEN : Besides rise in prices of the foodgrains distributed by the fair price shops, is it a fact that the quality of foodgrains is also deteriorating every year and there are complaints about it from almost all parts of the country, including towns, cities and villages ? If so, may I know what steps Government are taking to improve the quality of rice supplied ?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE : There is some truth in the complaint made by the hon member. Our attention has been drawn to it and my ministry is seized of the matter. Last year large quantities of wheat were damaged by rain and in order to help the producers we have to purchase the rain-damaged wheat. Therefore, there are some genuine complaints

about it. Regarding rice ultimately it is only the public procurement agencies which procure it and on the basis of our past experience, we are trying to improve the system as a whole.

MR. SPEAKER : Next question.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : He has not touched on sugar, which is also distributed through fair price shops. It is also a food-gram.

MR. SPEAKER : Next question.

Sale of Wheat by F. C. I. in Open Market

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*82. **SHRI S. P. BHATTACHARYYA:**
SHRI S. R. DAMANI :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the reasons for the Food Corporation of India selling wheat stocks in the open market;

(b) the quantities sold so far, price realised and the profit or loss thereof; and

(c) the manner in which these sales have helped price stabilization ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE) : (a) To arrest the upward trend in the prices of wheat in the open market and to bring down its price.

(b) So far, the quantity sold is 1,10,463 tonnes. The average price realised has been slightly above Rs. 82 per quintal as against the issue price of Rs. 78 per quintal fixed by Government for issue through the public distribution system. The extra amount realised by open market sales as against the issue price of Rs. 78 is yet to be worked out.