

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

given by whom? Is it by Central Government?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : Licences are given by central Government. But, I can not say whether there is any application pending from Haryana.

SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK : Sir, is it not a fact that when the prices of vanaspati are increased, simultaneously, the price of pure desi ghee is also increased? Has the Government any plan to bring the prices of pure desi ghee under control? At the same time I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what extra steps are being taken by Government to check the illegal marketing of vanaspati ghee or edible oils, especially at the time of festivals like Holi, Diwali, Id, etc.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : Sir, Government has no control over the prices of desi ghee and we do not plan to impose any controls. As regards, illegal marketing of vanaspati during festival season, I have not been able to understand the question of the hon. Member. There is no illegal marketing as such. Marketing is done under regulations through fair price shops as also through private agencies that the manufacturers appoint. During festival season, we try to ensure that there is sufficient availability in the market for the consumers.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : I would like to know from the hon. Minister why vanaspati is not available at retail shops at fair prices.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : Where?

(Interruptions)

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : Every where in the country.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : There are more than three lakh fair price shops through which edible oils are distributed in our public distribution system and unless I know where the shortages have occurred, I will not be in a position to answer.

The prices of edible oils in the public distribution system are fixed and prices of vanaspati are regulated through voluntary agreement between Government and the manufacturers. If there is any complaint of over-charging of prices, then action is taken

against the dealers. The prices are printed on the packages and the consumers know at what price Government has allowed these things to be sold. Therefore, I cannot say whether there is any general complaint, as regard over-charging of edible oils that we import and distribute through the public distribution system.

There is one correction that I would like to make. I have stated that cooperatives would take the third place. But now I have been informed by my Ministry that cooperatives are second in priority for licensing of new units.

SHRI D. B. PATIL : it has been stated in the reply that the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations have been advised that they can procure 30% of vanaspati produced by vanaspati units within their respective jurisdiction for sale through Government nominees or through Public Distribution System. So, I would like to know the names of the State which have availed of this facility. There is a provision of 30 per cent purchase of the produce in the jurisdiction of the States. Has any State availed of this facility; if so to what extent?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : I am not able to reply off-hand to this question. The hon. Member might be asked to give a separate notice.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ. : The hon. Minister has said that as of now government agencies and cooperatives will be given licences. But he has said if in backward regions the government does not come forward or the cooperatives do not come forward, then the private parties will be considered for granting licences. In Jammu, there are—this is my information—four parties which have established their vanaspati units. From Kashmir, there are already six applications pending before the Ministry and not one of them has been considered for granting licences; and Kashmir has a very special case for establishment of a unit in Srinagar or any other part because our road, by and large, is a fair-weather road. When it gets closed, people of Kashmir are put to a lot of trouble. Will be consider granting of licences to one or two parties in Kashmir Valley so that this scarcity is removed?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : All appli-

cations are considered on merit by the Licensing Committee set up by the Ministry of Industry. I am not in a position to say yes or no to any request for a new licence.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : Unless the Ministry of Food clears the application, a licence cannot be granted by the Ministry of Commerce.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You can write to him separately.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : He has not answered my point. That is why we face a great difficulty.

SHRI NARESH CHANDRA CHATURVEDI : I would like to know from the hon. Minister the quota of vanaspati fixed separately for V.I.Ps. in the Ganesh Floor Mills, which is an undertaking of the Central Government, along with the names of such VIPs as there is black marketing of Rs. 30 to 40 per tin of vanaspati. I would also like to know how the distribution of this quota is made as the benefit of this quota accretes only to the quotaholders and not to the common people.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : A separate notice is required. With regard to another question, I would like to clarify. At that time, I did not have the information. With regard to 30 per cent which the State Governments can acquire from the manufacturers in their jurisdiction, no State has so far availed of this facility.

SHRI BHATTAM SREERAMAMURTHY : There is a sudden and steep rise in prices of vanaspati in recent days. Is the government not aware of it or don't they contemplate taking some action about it? As the Minister just now said there is no proposal for introducing any control about it, is it the assurance for the manufacturers or will they take some steps to safeguard the interest of the common consumers?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : Vanaspati prices are more or less controlled under a voluntary agreement, as I stated. What I said earlier with regard to government having intention to control prices was with regard to *desi* ghee and not vanaspati. The price of vanaspati for each pack recently had to be raised on account of increase in excise duty and also in the budget from 5 per cent to 10 per cent. As a result of that, there has been a

slight increase.

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has just mentioned that many State Governments are not availing themselves of the facilities extended by the Central Government. I would like to know whether the hon. Minister will issue directions to every State Government in this respect.

Secondly, in some tribal areas, where power houses are being set up or work on some other development complexes is going on, there is no proper arrangement for the supply of vanaspati with the result that the poor workers and the tribals have to pay more for it. Taking this in to consideration, will a country-wide survey be undertaken to identify the pockets facing shortage of vanaspati and will the hon. Minister issue directives to the State Governments to ensure that there is no shortage of vanaspati in those pockets? Would the hon. Minister give an assurance in this regard here?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH : It is a suggestion. But this suggestion has already been acted upon, when we provided this facility to the States. If they do not find it fit to avail of then the Central Government cannot do anything about it.

[English]

Ban on New Bengali Film for Chitramala

*163. SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN :
SHRI AJIT KUMAR SAHA :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) the reasons behind the ban on new Bengali films for Chitramala programme whereas the Hindi films would be telecast in Chitrahhar Programme; and

(b) the steps taken by Government to telecast new films in the Chitramala Programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI V. N. GADGIL) : (a) and (b). The 'Chitramala' programme of Doordarshan consists of song and dance sequences from feature films in various regio-