

are in such a position that the shortage of wagons could be made up. What was the assessment of the Planning Commission to increase the number of wagons and how much have they really increased? It is being said that they have invested all the money in gauge conversion and that is why the whole industry in the country is going to face acute shortage by October. The Minister should tell us what is his requirement.

MR. SPEAKER : In fact, he has replied to your question in the first part itself. Now, you can repeat it if you like.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF : Sir, I would like to categorically assure the House that there is no question of diversion of money or making the availability of wagons suffer because of gauge conversion or anything. These are two separate requirements. I categorically assure to the trade and industry through the House that there will not be any shortage of wagons. We have already taken measures. Whatever traffic anybody wants to offer, we are in a position to carry.

MR. SPEAKER : Question No. 22 - Shri Shiv Sharan Verma - Absent

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: Sir, let these two question nos. 23 & 39 be clubbed together.

MR. SPEAKER : . . . QUESTION NO. 23 - Shri Surya Narayan Yadav - Absent

Shri Mohan Rawale.

[Translation]

Pulses

*23. SHRI SURYA NARAYAN YADAV :

+
SHRI MOHAN RAWALE :

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the extent of rise in the prices of Pulses during recent months as compared to previous three years, year-wise;

(b) the steps taken by the Government to control the prices;

(c) whether the Union Government has asked the STC and NAFED to import Pulses to meet the demand;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the extent to which the import of Pulses will meet the shortage; and

(f) whether the Government have suggested reduction in the present import duty?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH) : (a) to (f) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) Percentage variation in wholesale price Indices of Pulses for the month ending June, 95 and the corresponding period for previous 3 years is given at Annexure.

(b) Apart from taking certain long-term measures to increase the production of pulses in the country like bringing pulses under the purview of Technology Mission, the other steps taken by the Government to contain the rise in the prices of pulses include placing pulses under OGL for import, reduction of customs duty on import of pulses from 10% to 5% etc. Recently, the Pulses, Edible Oilseeds and Edible Oils (Storage Control) Order, 1977 has been amended to exclude imported pulses from the purview of storage limits prescribed under the said Order.

This is expected to ensure increased availability of imported pulses in the indigenous market. Pulses are also supplied through retail cooperative outlets like Kendriya Bhandar, Super Bazar and State Civil Supplies Corporations.

(c) and (d) As the import of pulses is already under OGL, agencies like STC and NAFED are also free to import pulses to meet the demand.

(e) The present estimated gap between the demand and supply of pulses is in the range of 4 to 5 million tonnes. It is not possible to estimate precisely the quantity of pulses that will be actually imported during the year 1995-96. The total quantity of pulses imported by all agencies during 1994-95 was 5.55 lakh tonnes as against 6.28 lakh tonnes during 1993-94.

(f) The customs duty on import of pulses has already been reduced from 10% to 5% very recently.

ANNEXURE

Percentage Variation in the Wholesale Price Index Numbers of Pulses During The Month Ending June, 1995 and During The Corresponding Period in the Previous 3 Years

Commodity	Percentage Variation (Ending June)			
	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95
Pulses	+5.4	+4.6	+25.6	+17.1
(Sub-group)				
Gram	-4.7	+33.8	+31.0	-23.1

Commodity	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95
Arhar	+0 7	-1 6	+13 2	+53 4
Moong	+37 2	-10 4	+20 6	+10 6
Masur	-0 9	+0 8	+23 5	+20 8
Urad	+2 6	-13 2	+43 2	+€1 1

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE Mr Speaker, Sir, the Congress had promised during the election in 1991 that it would reduce inflation in hundred days. The Prices of the Pulses which were sold at Rs 10 per kg in 1991, have now gone sky rocketted. Today, Arhar is being sold at Rs 30 per kg, Urad at Rs 40 per kg, moong at Rs 25 per kg and Gram at Rs 20 per kg.

The Minister has said -

[English]

"The total quantity of pulses imported by all agencies during 1994-95 was 5.55 lakh tonnes."

[Translation]

I want to know from the Hon'ble Minister as to why the prices of pulses are not going down despite these measures? Why is it that despite the sufficient capacity for the production of pulses and availability of agricultural land, the production of pulses is not increasing in the country? Why the Green Revolution has failed in this regard? Whether the Government proposes to make a buffer stock of pulses like that of wheat and rice and what are the factors behind the incessant rise in the prices of pulses?

SHRI BUTA SINGH Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, as per the information available with me, the prices of pulses quoted by the hon'ble Member are not correct.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE You go to the Market
(Interruptions)

SHRI BUTA SINGH According to my information the price of Gram is Rs 14 per kg and that of Arhar, Rs 20 per kg
(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA This is the wrong information being given

[English]

MR SPEAKER If you do not want to hear the reply, I can ask the Minister to take his seat

(Interruptions)

MR SPEAKER Please do understand that one of the Members has asked a question and he expects to hear a reply. At the same time you are not allowing him to hear the reply by raising your voices.

[Translation]

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA Where it could be available at the price of Rs 14?

SHRI BUTA SINGH There is no doubt that the prices of pulses has been increasing from the last three years. The main reason is that the production of pulses has dwindled. This phenomenon is prevalent not only in India but all over the world. The situation in India is comparatively better. There was a gap of 4 to 5 million tonnes per year and this gap was really a big gap.
(Interruptions)

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA Whether you export them?

SHRI BUTA SINGH No export has been made.

[English]

MR SPEAKER You can ask the same question as supplementary. This is not correct. This is going on much beyond a certain limit. You can ask only the relevant question.

[Translation]

SHRI BUTA SINGH Such units have got permission to export which export pulses after processing them but normally nobody has got permission to export pulses. The Government has imported pulses under O.G.L. in order to make up the gap of 4 to 5 million tonnes and import duty has also been reduced to 10 to 5 percent. Everyone has been given permission to import. We are trying to increase the production of pulses. For this, one Technology Mission has been set up and farmers are given facilities for this, so that they could increase the production of pulses and various other efforts are being made in this regard. The Storage Act has been amended. Co-operative stores, the Government stores or private stores import pulses. A provision has been made for storing more pulses by them. Many steps are being taken. I admit that the prices of pulses have increased considerably but the main reason therefore is that the production of pulses in our country falls short of our demand. Long term steps are being taken by the Ministry of AGRICULTURE in order to boost the production of pulses.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE Hon Speaker, Sir, I appeal to you that you should go to Super Market and see what is the trend there. I want to ask the Hon Minister as to whether or not the promises made in 1991 and the prices at which pulses are being sold, prove Government's failure. Please give your reply in yes or no?

SHRI BUTA SINGH : There is no doubt that the efforts are being made by the Government to check the prices of pulses. The prices of Gram have gone down as compared to the prices prevailing in other countries. We are trying to boost up the production as well, so that the prices could be curbed. Truth is that when production goes down, then the prices of pulses go up.

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, poor people get protein from pulses but it is sad that the prices of pulses have increased one and half times within one and half month. Hon. Minister is not providing information to the House. Wherefrom it could be imported when there is shortage of pulses all over the world? Secondly, now since you have accepted that pulses have been exported on a large scale from here, what is the quantity of pulses exported so far, and what is its impact on the rise or fall in prices of pulses in the Indian Market?

SHRI BUTA SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to request that whatever I have said should not be quoted wrongly. I have said that there are some export oriented units which import pulses and they export after processing them here only. The reason is that they are not processed outside. Outside this country only whole pulses are available and these are grinded here and then they are exported. Those pulses are not produced in the country. Those are brought here just for getting them processed. Pulses are exported after having processed them and a profit is earned on them. These pulses are brought from Turkey, Hungary, Canada, Australia, China-Burma, Thailand and Tanzania.

MR SPEAKER : What is the quantity exported so far?

SHRI BUTA SINGH : There are some units in Private Sector and there is a ban on the export of indigenous pulses.

[English]

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, as pulses are the available sources of protein for the common people of this country and as their per capita availability has come down to nearly 55 per cent, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister for Food -- who is also the former Minister of Agriculture and by whose side the present Minister of Agriculture is sitting -- whether the Government will extend the plasticulture subsidy which he has introduced currently for which a lot of funds are made available, through sprinkler system . . .

MR. SPEAKER : This is not relevant; not allowed.

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE : I am coming to the question, Sir. You have not understood what I am saying. Please permit me. Will the Government extend this plasticulture subsidy scheme for the pulse crop also,

that is my main question, Sir. We have to increase the productivity. That is more important.

SHRI BUTA SINGH : The facilities that are being extended to farmers are being allowed through the NABARD. The separate line of credit has been sanctioned by the NABARD for credit to the Central Cooperative Societies to encourage farmers to take more areas under pulses under drip irrigation. Subsidies are being provided, better seeds are provided, techniques available . . .

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE : Are the sprinklers being provided for the pulse crops?

SHRI BUTA SINGH : Sprinkler are also allowed on subsidy. A lot of inputs are being subsidised for those farmers who are taking up production of pulses. I have already written separately to the Agriculture Minister to kind y mount National Technology Mission, it has already been mounted, so that the farmers who grow cash crops are encouraged to grow pulses to get better profits.

Therefore, for making it more profitable, it has to be made a little more attractive which the Hon. Agriculture Minister has already accepted. He is replying by sitting here that he has accepted our proposals for enthusing the farmers to grow more crops.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI BHAVNA CHIKHLIA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to ask from Mr. Minister through you that farmers are not getting support price according to their production. You yourself held that the production of pulses had gone down. Whether an assurance will be given to the House that the farmers who produce pulses will get support price according to their production?

The second thing is that you have said in reply to my question that an import of 6.28 metric tonne was made during 1993-94. 5.55 metric tonne pulses were imported during 1994-95. It is good that the import has gone down. What are the reasons that the imports have gone down? Is it because the production has gone up or people have stopped eating it? The people from middle class below the poverty line eat only pulses and bread. I want to know how this has gone down?

SHRI BUTA SINGH : Mr. Speaker, if Hon. Member has gone through the statement, it is categorically mentioned that the production of pulses has increased from ten and half million tonnes to fourteen and half million tonnes. This has made the situation optimistic. It is hoped that the production of pulses will increase furthermore and their price will go down furthermore. In the meantime we have reduced the import duty. This has been placed under OGL.

We are trying that the import of pulses be promoted. We have discussed the issue with our ministerial colleagues. We will try to check the prices of pulses.

SHRIMATI BHAVNA CHIKHLIA: I would like to know as to whether you will try to give better support price to the farmers?

SHRI BUTA SINGH: At present it is in the open market, it is not with the PDS. Efforts are being made for this and we are trying that they should get better price.

[English]

SHRIMATI CHANDRA PRABHA URS : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is true that the day-to-day basic necessity of any common man, whether he belongs to upper class or middle class or lower class includes basic food materials like cereals and other pulses. For the last 3-4 years, we have been finding that there is a lot of encouragement and incentives given through many other measures by the Agriculture Ministry and other Departments for growing commercial crops like cotton, sugarcane and other such crops. But for growing pulses, we have to give sufficient incentives to the farmers in proportion to other crops. We have been observing that there has been a total reduction in the production of these cereals and pulses. If we go to the retail shops, the prices are increased, sometimes by more than four times.

So, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether he is going to give some more incentives to the growers or the farmers through the PDS.

MR. SPEAKER : I think that question has already been replied. It is not necessary to ask the same question again.

SHRIMATI CHANDRA PRABHA URS : Sir, I want to know whether the Food Ministry is proposing to distribute some of these pulses through the PDS.

MR. SPEAKER: Both these questions have been replied by the Minister. As far as PDS is concerned, he has said "No".

[Translation]

SHRI SATYADEO SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Minister has accepted in the reply that there is a gap of five lakh tonnes between the production and consumption of pulses. You have said that you have urged upon the Agricultural Ministry and efforts are being made for increasing its production. I will like to know through you as to whether you will go for import of pulses in order to fill up the gap of five lakh tonnes. If not, then what other alternative you have considered to adopt? You have said that pulses are exported after having procured the imported pulses, will you consider to stop this export as long as there is a shortage of pulses?

SHRI BUTA SINGH : I have never said that we will export. I have said that EOU, which is in the private sector, has got

permission to export pulses after having procured them. The Government will consider this aspect. Secondly, you have talked about shortage and a gap between supply and demand. Farmers will be encouraged with the help of state Governments to grow more and more pulses so that the gap could be bridged. For this, good quality seeds are given to them. Subsidy is given for sprinkler system, special kits are also given so that the production of pulses could be increased. Besides, if needed, as the Hon. Agricultural Minister has said that he will hold a review meeting with the State Government. This year, more pulses are expected to be produced. We are trying our best in this direction and besides.

[English]

Above all we are allowing the dal to be imported on OGL by reducing the import duty to 5 per cent.

[Translation]

SHRI ANADI CHARAN DAS: Prices soar up, but this does not have any impact on we poor people. But two things are important for us, garlic and onions. The prices of garlic goes up. Mr. Minister has not referred to garlic. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Here, we do not call pulses as garlic. . . . (Interruptions).

[English]

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : Sir, the facts indicate that the percentage growth of pulses production is 14 per cent. It has risen from 10 millions to 14 millions. Despite such a high rise in production, the rate of growth of price rise in pulses is much higher than the increase in the general inflation rate. The national economy has grown by, say, 5 or 6 per cent. Industries have grown by, say, 8 or 9 per cent. Now, this is the condition.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : Nirmal Kantiji, Let 'Dal' be 'Dal', Do not make it 'theri'.

[English]

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : In this context, despite 40 per cent increase in production the price rise is very high. You are implying that you do not know how much is going to be imported for the present year. My question arises out of this. Do you not think that when the situation is so awkward that with such a high growth rate, the prices continue to rise at a phenomenal rate, the public sector should go in for import directly and certain amount should be fixed for it?

SHRI BUTA SINGH : This is a suggestion for action.

MR. SPEAKER : Suggestion for action is an assurance.

SRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : Since you have disallowed clubbing of my questions, I shall be on *dal*.

MR. SPEAKER : But you should not go to masala and pyaj.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : Now I would like to know whether the Minister will assure that pulses will be supplied through public distribution system and if so from when ?

SHRI BUTA SINGH : At present there is no such scheme with the Government of India to put pulses in the public distribution system but we are examining it.

SHRI PRITHVIRAJ D. CHAVAN : Sir, Last year when there was a tremendous shortage of sugar the Government took a decision to import sugar on OGL at zero duty. Now, this year since there is shortage in respect of pulses, the Government has put it on OGL and reduced the import duty from 10 per cent to 5 per cent. I would like to know from the Government why they have kept the import duty at 5 per cent. Why do you not import pulses also at zero per cent duty ? Will the Minister take this up in the next meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Prices because the common man is agitated?

SHRI BUTA SINGH : Sir, one way of knowing how much quantity of pulses have really arrived at the ports is through the import duty. Otherwise 5 per cent is just nominal.

Productivity of Forests

*24. SHRI GOPINATH GAJAPATHI : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have a proposal/specific plan to raise the productivity of forests in the country ;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) Whether the facilities to establish seed storage and seed technology laboratories are being extended so as to see that the quality seeds that are collected can be appropriately utilised for raising good planting stock; and

(d) if so, the details regarding the Testing Rules framed for all the important species in order to make available the certified seeds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) :

(a) Yes, sir.

(b) The increase in the productivity of forests has been planned by massive afforestation and enrichment plantation of open and degraded forests under various schemes, including Externally Aided Projects, through use of improved planting stock. Adequate protection of natural forests with proper technical upgradation by silvicultural treatment is being done to increase production. National

Forestry Action Plan (NFAP) currently under preparation has also identified the 'Increase in productivity of Forests' as a high priority area.

(c) Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) is carrying out research in development of technology for quality seeds and is creating seed processing facilities including, the establishment of seed banks, through eight centres located in various parts of the country. The Ministry of Environment and Forests is also providing 100% central assistance under a Centrally Sponsored Scheme to the State Governments for seed development activities. Under this scheme, the Central Government has provided Rs. 1030 lakh to State Governments during the period from 1988-89 to 1994-95.

(d) ICFRE has so far developed the testing rules for 59 important forest tree species.

SHRI GOPINATH GAJAPATHI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in this era of environment consciousness, the efforts made by the Government of India for the promotion of vital subject of forestry is indeed commendable. Now the Central Governments has provided Rs. 1030 lakh to the State Governments from the years 1988 to 1995. May I know from the Hon. Union Minister the Statewise allocation out of this Rs. 1030 lakh under the Centrally sponsored scheme; and to what extent the State Government have been able to succeed in the development of seeds quality like in setting up of Gene Banks and Seed Technology Laboratories ?

SHRI KAMAL NATH : Sir, if the Hon. Member wants the Statewise distribution of the Rs 1030 lakh, which has been allotted in these years, there is a chart, which I will be happy to send to the Member. But for any specific State and for any specific year which Hon. Members desires to know, I will be able to give it to him straightaway. Sir, under the seed development programme which we have, we have achieved considerable success. That is why, our seed productivity has gone up and the States were, under this programme, required to do various practices which they have reasonably and successfully done.

SHRI GOPI NATH GAJAPATHI : Mr. Speaker, Sir I would also like to know from our dynamic Union Minister, as to which are the different States where the National Forestry Action Plan is being implemented; and whether it would be introduced in Orissa State and also the year by which the plan would be implemented in the entire country as well.

SRI KAMAL NATH : Sir, for the first time , we launched the preparation of the National Forestry Action Programme. The National Forestry Action Programme is a perspective document and also includes the action plan giving higher priority to increase the productivity of the areas under forests and this priority is being given next only to preservation of existing forest resources. This National Forestry Action Programme is in the process of completion of its final stages