

RAJYA SABHA

Tuesday, 6th May 1997/16 Vaisakha
1919 (Saka).

The House met at eleven of the clock.

Mr. Chairman in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

चाय विकास योजना

*421. श्री राम जेठमलानी: क्या वाणिज्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि सरकार ने देश में दस वर्षीय चाय विकास योजना तैयार की है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो क्या यह भी सच है कि इस योजना के अंतर्गत दक्षिण भारत के विभिन्न राज्यों में चाय उत्पादन को बढ़ावा देने के लिए विभिन्न सुविधाएं उपलब्ध कराए जाने का विचार है;

(ग) यदि हां, तो ये सुविधाएं क्या हैं और विकास योजना के अंतर्गत समय-सीमा तथा उत्पादन का लक्ष्य क्या है।

(घ) क्या सरकार इस योजना का देश के अन्य क्षेत्रों में भी विस्तार करने का विचार रखती रखती है, और

(ङ) यदि हां, तो उसका ब्यौरा क्या है?

वाणिज्य मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री बोल्ला बुल्ली रमैया) (क) जी, नहीं।

(ख) से (ङ) प्रश्न नहीं उठता।

Shortfall in Tea Export

†*430. SHRI SOLIPETA
RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated production of Indian tea during 1996 and target fixed thereof; and

(b) the reasons for shortfall in country's tea export in 1996?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) (a) Estimated production of tea in India during the Calendar year 1996 was 780 million kg. Targets for the production

†प्रश्न सं* 421 और 430 को साथ-साथ लिया गया।

†Question no * 421 and 430 were taken together.

of tea are fixed on financial yearwise basis and for the financial year 1996-97 the target of production was 790 million kg-

(b) Decline in exports of tea during the year 1996 has been on account of lower imports of tea by Russia under the debt repayment route and lower exports to Poland, Ukraine, Egypt etc.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Q. No. 421.

SHRI SOLIPETA
RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Sir, I request you to club questions 421 and 430.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We will club them together.

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: Sir, considering that this Government is busy with many other important things, I am not surprised at their ignorance. This is a subject which has attracted so much attention. Here is the *Business Standard* of 19th November. Here is the *Hindustan Times* of the same day. Articles on this topic have been appearing almost every day and the Government says that there is nothing. I am quite sure that it is a case of either total negligence or ignorance or newness. The only supplementary that I can put is: Will the hon. Minister give an assurance that he will look into the newspaper material. There are detailed proposals. One of the proposals says that the total production of Indian tea, which is now 754 million kilograms, is expected to increase by 18 million kilograms, in the next ten years. Now this has raised a serious problem. The Tea board is in a financial mess. The people in the South are asking for a Rs. 100 crore subsidy for tea. The Tea board is making some suggestions to the Government and the Minister quietly says there is nothing at all and 'a', 'b', 'c' questions don't arise.

SHRI TRILOKI NATH
CHATURVEDI: On the 9th, he was not sure of his existence.

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: The

least that he should do is to assure the House that he will make up for this ignorance.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister is answering.

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, whatever the newspapers may say, we have the 9th Five year Plan programme and in the 9th Five year Plan programme, we have estimated that there should be one thousand million kilograms of tea production in the country. That is our Plan. We will give you the export details for the Plan period year by year. That is what we are going to give you. But a 10-year Plan is not part of our programme and if the newspapers are saying something, I will go through them. I have no objection.

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: Then the answer to the question is wrong. The first part of the question is whether it is a fact that the Government has formulated a ten-year development plan for the country. If you have formulated a nine-year or an eleven-year plan, then your answer to the 10-year question is no! you should come out: with the whole truth and say what the Plan is about.

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH: That is why I said that the Five Year Plan is there. We have the 9th Five Year Plan. We will give you the details. But there is no 10-year Plan.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has technically answered your question.

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: Very technical. If you owe me a lakh of rupees, you say I don't owe you a lakh of rupees but I owe you Rs. 99.99 lakhs. I have never understood it. It should be very clear....

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you had asked: Has the Government formulated any plan and not say a "10-year Plan" (Interruptions)....

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: All newspapers talk of a 10-year Plan. All newspapers have said so. At least, you

contradict this report that it is not 10 years but it is nine years..

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH: The Five Year Plan is there. In the 9th Five Year Plan, the Planning Commission has submitted (Interruptions)....

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: I think the hon. Minister should go and take some tea and then come to the House.

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH: Okay, I will do that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think you have finished your second supplementary also.

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: What supplementary can I put?

SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Sir, ... (Interruptions)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will come to you. We have clubbed the questions. Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy.

SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The gross area under tea plantation crops since 1970-71 is constant at 0.4 million hectares. Assam which produces more than 50 per cent of our tea production has suffered due to terrorist activities in a large number of tea gardens. Added to this, our recent reports show that in South India, tea growers are shifting to other crops on account of losing markets in Russia and CIS countries to Sri Lanka and Kenya. The average yield of tea per hectare in India is only 1787 kgs as compared to 3340 kgs in Kenya. The per kg average cost of production of tea in India is Rs. 30 as against Kenya's Rs. 30 only. It is impossible to achieve the target unless some drastic steps are taken. In view of this, I would like to ask the hon. Minister what steps the Government is going to take to increase tea production.

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, for the development of tea we have taken a number of steps in the Five Year Plan where we are going to ask the World Bank for assistance for

different types of development on plantations, yields, productivity and also financing of various projects that are going on under these things. Simultaneously, as the hon. Member has also said, our market in Russia is one of the things which has affected us. In spite of that, whatever we are able to produce this year, we are able to market it and we are able to make enough amount out of this. Definitely, we have a number of other schemes which are coming up and we will see that production and productivity will also go up in this country.

SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Sir, though it is not satisfactory, I will put my second question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, you have no second question.

SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Sir, it is regarding export of tea. It is in my question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: When you club together, we do not have a second supplementary.

SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Kindly permit me as part (b).

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, because he did not put a second supplementary, I will allow you so that it is not held as a precedent.

SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Thank you, Sir. Tea is one of the most important foreign exchange earners of the country. We are able to export only 20 per cent of our tea production, keeping 80 per cent to meet the domestic demand. While our production of tea is increasing at the rate of 2.65 per cent per annum, our consumption is increasing at the rate of three per cent. Compared to eighties we have already lost tea export market heavily from 242 million kgs to 161 million kgs now. Sri Lanka, Kenya and China are giving us a tough competition. In view of these factors, I want to know

from the hon. Minister how the Government is going to prevent the decline in tea exports, which he himself has admitted in his reply, and increase it?

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH: Sir, in 1995-96, we have exported Rs. 1,191 crores exports on this. In 1996-97, up to February we have exported about Rs. 1,098 crores and we expect that we will exceed last years export. Not only in terms of quality but the price was also increased. That is why we have no problem as far as the question of exports is concerned. We will definitely see that our tea is exported. We are also going to have value-added products. Instead of exporting bulk tea we are making factories and so on. That is why we are able to improve different types of market, different types of qualities in various parts of the country. Sir, we will definitely see to it that the surplus production that is available in this-country is exported without any difficulty.

SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, 104 tea gardens in Assam are now sick. What steps are the Government going to take? This is the main industry of Assam; I think, Mr. Minister you know that. So, I want a specific reply about the 104 sick industries. What steps are you going to take for these sick industries?

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH: In Assam especially, Research and Development is going on. It is specialising more on the development of various plantations with better varieties. We will see to it that there is development in Assam in spite of the insurgents and various activities of lawlessness. Otherwise, we can give additional support, whatever is required for them.

SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Sir, this is a statement given in the House but you are not going to implement. In so many versions you have given a statement in the House but there is no

implementation. I want a specific time-frame, when it will be done.

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH: For the next Five Year Plan, I have already given the projects. During the Five Year Plan period we will definitely try to do it.

डा.वाई.लक्ष्मी प्रसाद: माननीय सभापति महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि भारत में कुल चाय उत्पादन का 27 प्रतिशत दक्षिण के तीन राज्यों तमिलनाडु, केरल और कर्नाटक में हो रहा है, लेकिन दुर्भाग्य की बात यहाँ है कि अब वहाँ के किसान चाय को छोड़कर अन्य फसल उगा रहे हैं और इसका कारण यह है कि यह जो चाय हम विदेशों में बेचना चाहते हैं, लेकिन रूस आदि अन्य देश जो है वह सभी केन्या से चान मंगा रहे हैं क्योंकि हमारी चाय से उनकी चाय बहुत सस्ती है। तो इस विषय में आप क्या सोच रहे हैं ताकि हमारे दक्षिण के चाय उगाने वाले इन किसानों का नुकसान न हो?

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH: Mr Chairman, Sir, the South Indian tea production to some extent is not able to grow further than what it was before due to various reasons. But we are also trying to shift to the North-Eastern States so that new areas can be developed. We will also find new markets. As I said earlier, the Russian market, the Romanian Market and various other markets have been affected due to reasons that are beyond our control. We are finding new markets and a new thrust is being given to tea export. We find that there will be no difficulty and we will be able to export enough quantities. But the tea production also depends on the production of various other crops which are more attractive. If various other crops fetch a higher price, then we will have to shift it. But that is not going to affect. The other parts of the country have also to be developed more on the tea side.

DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: What about the farmers of these three southern States?

श्री नरेन्द्र मोहन: सभापति महोदय, माननीय मंत्री जी, को यह बात तो मालूम होगी कि पहले कभी उत्तर प्रदेश में भी चाय का उत्पादन हुआ करता था और आजादी के

बाद से धीरे-धीरे वह उत्पादन समाप्त हो गया। उत्तर प्रदेश, हिमाचल प्रदेश और हिमाचल के तमाम क्षेत्र ऐसे हैं, जहाँ चाय का उत्पादन हो सकता है। तो मेरा पहला प्रश्न यह रहेगा कि क्या इस संदर्भ में कोई जांच पड़ताल सरकार ने कराई है? दुसरी बात यह है कि जैसा आपको बताया गया है मंत्री जी कि हमारे देश में चाय की उत्पादन लागत बहुत ज्यादा हो गई है। उसके दो कारण हैं- एक तो असम में जिस तरह की गतिविधियाँ हुई हैं उसकी वजह से असम और पूर्वोत्तर राज्यों में चाय की उत्पादन लागत बहुत बढ़ गई है और इससे उत्पादन भी घटता जा रहा है। इस समस्या को देखते हुए क्या कोई आपने एक्शन प्लान बनाया है? अगर कोई एक्शन प्लान बनाया है तो वह क्या है। किस प्रकार का है? और आतंकवादी गतिविधियों के कारण असम के चाय उद्योग पर जो दूष्प्रभाव पड़ा है, उसको दूर करने के लिए आप क्या सोच रहे हैं?

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, so far as the insurgent activities are concerned, I think the Tea Board can't do anything. It is for the State Government and the Government of India to take necessary steps in that regard.

श्री नरेन्द्र मोहन: आपने क्या गृह मंत्रालय का ध्यान आकर्षित किया है? उन्हें कोई चिट्ठी लिखी है या कोई कार्यवाही की है? आप यह कहकर कैसे बच सकते हैं कि यह आपका कार्य नहीं है। चाय उद्योग को बढ़ाने की जिम्मेदारी तो आपकी है।

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: How can he escape the responsibility as a Minister?

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH: No, Sir. I also take the recommendations about the areas. We have to develop those areas where they don't have any insurgent activity. That is the main point that I am trying to make. We are taking up research and other developmental activities in those areas where there is a possibility of tea production and we are also asking the Tea Board to go and find out whether those areas can be developed so that there is much more production and the cost of production also comes down.

SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: But

what about Uttar Pradesh? Are you really going to develop tea plantation in U.P. which used to produce a lot of tea earlier?

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH: Sir, U.P. is part of those areas that we are planning to develop.

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES: Sir, it will not suffice to say that the Government will provide inputs for the development of tea production in the country. The hon. Commerce Minister has to be a good salesman. We know that tea from Darjeeling is being sold in UK as Ceylon Tea. I think there is still that colonial hang-over and the hang-over of the East India Company. Now that India has signed the WTO agreement, has the Government of India objected to it and asked for our tea to be branded only in an Indian name?

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH: For your information, Sir, the total production of Darjeeling Tea is much less than what is sold internationally. That is why other brands of Darjeeling Tea are coming in. I can give you the entire data. Whatever quantity is available in the international market, it is much more than what we are producing. I will consider the point you raised about U.K. We will definitely take action on those points.

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES: Will it not come under the WTO?

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH: No. The WTO will not come into picture. ...*(Interruptions)*... It will not go to the WTO. We can handle this point.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Sir, so far as tea exports are concerned, we are seeing a new trend after this multilateralism has come in, guiding and regulating trade activities. The developed countries are raising new non-tariff issues. So far as tea is concerned, the western countries are charging that our tea is affected due to use of certain pesticides and all that. I want to know whether the Government is really

developing some kind of research and study to refute these non-tariff issues which are often not based on the reality and to augment export of Indian tea.

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Hon. Member's suggestion is well taken. He has given an important suggestion. We are making a lot of efforts in this direction. The tariff restrictions have not come in the way so much so far, but in spite of that, we are also trying to see that the quality of our tea in the international market is improved.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have raised a point about the quality of tea.

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH: We are also having our own research and development activities. We are carrying out inspections in order to maintain the quality of our tea. We are also making our people understand all these major issues. We are definitely going to take up our issues very well. These tariff issues are not affecting us much.

श्री राजनाथ सिंह सुर्या: सभापति महोदय, मंत्री जी ने अपने उत्तर में यह कहा कि उत्तर प्रदेश में चाय के उत्पादन को बढ़ावा देने के लिए सारे देश में जो प्रयत्न किया जा रहे हैं उसमें उत्तर प्रदेश भी शामिल है। शायद मंत्री जी को यह पता हो या नहीं कि उत्तर प्रदेश में अल्मोड़ा व पिथौरागढ़ जिले के बीच में एक स्थान ऐसा है जहां की चाय बहुत अरसा पहले दार्जिलिंग की चाय से कम मशहूर नहीं थी। जब वहां पर जमिंदारी थी, उस समय तक वहां चाय उत्पादित होती थी, उसके बाद चाय का उत्पादन वहां एक कोटि नाक का स्थान है। वहां बंद कर दिया गया। पिछले कुछ दिनों से वहां अनुसंधान का कार्य तो प्रारम्भ करने का निर्देश दे दिया गया लेकिन धन का आबंटन नहीं किया गया और इस कारण से वहां जो बहुत अच्छी क्वालिटी की चाय उत्पादित हो सकती है, वह उत्पादित नहीं हो रही है। तो मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि मंत्री जी क्या उसकी ओर विशेष ध्यान देने कि कृपा करेंगे?

SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Member's

suggestion is well taken. I will definitely talk to the Tea Board people and take care of it. I will see to it that they are able to make some efforts in this direction.

Health Management Consortium

*422. SHRI SURINDER KUMAR

SINGLA:* DR. SHRIKANT

RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Health Management Consortium;

(b) whether this has not been of any substantial use;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) what steps will be taken to improve this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP): (a) to (d) A Consortium of Premier Institutes was set up during the Seventh Five Year Plan under the aegis of the National Institute of Health & Family Welfare to coordinate, plan and undertake training and research in management of health and family welfare activities. 14 institutes at the National, Regional and State level are Members of the Consortium and the activities are guided by a Core Group of five Members.

The Consortium has contributed by developing training modules and organizing training courses, including those for distance learning. The initiative has been found to be useful and steps have been taken to coordinate the activities with the ongoing disease control programmes in the area of public health etc.

SHRI SURINDER KUMAR

+प्रश्न सं. * 421 और * 430 को साथ-साथ लिया गया।

* The Question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Surinder Kumar Singla,

SINGLA: Sir, my first question to the hon. Minister is whether it is a temporary charge or an additional charge.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister has not answered. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SURINDER KUMAR

SINGLA: Sir, I have put a small question to the hon. Minister whether it is a temporary charge or an additional charge. Even the BJP may object to a single-party Member to be a Minister in the Cabinet. Anyway, I don't mind it.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: We don't object to it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: You put your first supplementary.

SHRI SURINDER KUMAR SINGLA: Anyway, Sir. The answers to my questions are absolutely inadequate. It does not give an assessment of the Health Management Consortium, whether it has actually been useful or not. I want to know why this strategy of consortium was evolved. Is it that you found all health centres, particularly hospitals, not competent enough to evolve local training programmes, modules as well as distance learning programmes? Then why did you resort to this kind of consortium approach? The answer given is not complete. If it is essential, what are the special benefits that you got? This programme is in vogue for more than ten years. Has any assessment been made by the Ministry to find out whether this programme has been successful, particularly in the area of imparting practical training to the personnel in almost every field of medical training programme?

SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP: Sir, the hon. Member may know that the activities of the Ministry are carried out through different organisations at different levels. The work goes on throughout the country. 'We have a number of diseases to be taken care of. Since there are a number of institutions, it was felt that the work of these institutions should be coordinated. Basically, these institutions undertake