

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : The hon. Member must compliment me that I am very consistent in my answer. *(Interruptions)*. I do not contradict. *(Interruptions)*. I am sorry, you may be wanting to bring a privilege motion against me but I am quite sure that you will not get a chance easily.

I beg to differ from the hon. Member that the Government has been a mere spectator to the suffering of the beedi workers. It is not so. The Government is not a mere spectator. I have already stated that a number of welfare measures have been taken and a number of legislative measures have been taken. But it is true that whatever we are doing is not adequate. We are certainly trying our best. Not only the Central Government, but the State Governments also have been trying to do their best to see that their problems are reduced and certainly we will try to do our best.

श्री महेश्वर सिंह : सभापति महोदय, मुझे आपका संरक्षण चाहिये, मेरे सवाल का जवाब नहीं आया। मैंने यह जानना चाहा था कि तीसरी बार यह प्रश्न पूछा जा रहा है, संख्या ज्यों की त्यों हैं इसका क्या कारण है? दूसरा मैंने यह जानना चाहा था...

MR. CHAIRMAN : There is no second part. What is the point now?

श्री महेश्वर सिंह : 153 अगह् आपकी डिस्पेंसरीज हैं और 60 प्रतिशत जगहों पर आपके डाक्टर नहीं हैं... *(व्यवधान)*... कौन यह गिनती होगी। आइडेंटिटी कार्ड के लिए क्या आप कोई समयबद्ध योजना बनाएंगे क्या कोई अभियान चलायेंगे, इन प्रश्नों का जवाब नहीं आया?

SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT : When he says that identification cards are being issued by doctors in the dispensaries and more than 60 per cent of the dispensaries do not have doctors, how are the identify cards going to be issued? He must answer that.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : Identity cards are issued by the doctors on behalf of Labour Welfare Commissioners.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : We can ask Mr. Seshan to issue the identity cards.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : We have got 229 dispensaries. We did have a lot of problems in getting doctors for these dispensaries because according to the normal practice, we either request the State Governments to provide us with the doctors or we go to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, to provide us with doctors. It was very difficult. Recently, we have moved the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, to allow us to make direct recruitment of doctors to man our hospitals and dispensaries which are under the administrative control of the welfare funds. I am happy and I am thankful to the Health Ministry. They have given us this permission. We are now in the process of directly recruiting these doctors ourselves.

MR CHAIRMAN : Next question.

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA :

I seek permission to raise a half-an-hour discussion.

श्री महेश्वर सिंह : इस पर आधे घंटे की चर्चा होनी चाहिए।

श्री शिवचरण सिंह : मान्यवर, इस पर आधे घंटे की चर्चा होनी चाहिए।

MR. CHAIRMAN : This question is over
Retail price of Popular Brand of edible oils sold through Super Bazar/Kendriya Bhandar

*163. **SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI :**

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI :

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to refer to the answer to Starred Question 59 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 6th December, 1993 and state:

(a) the month-wise retail prices of popular brands of edible oils like Dhara and other brands sold through Super Bazar and

(b) The Question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Triloke Nath Chaturvedi,

Kendriya Bhandar and also other agencies in 1993 as compared with 1992; and

(b) the comparative retail prices of sugar during 1993 and 1992 in Super Bazar/Kendriya Bhandar and in the open market in Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI A. K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) A comparative statement showing the month-end retail prices of Dhara Vegetable oil at Super Bazar, Kendriya Bhandar and Sahayogi Cooperative Store, in Delhi and Postman Refined Groundnut Oil at Super Bazar, Kendriya Bhandar and in the open market in Delhi during the years 1992 and 1993 is given in Annexure-I. [See Appendix 170 Annexure No 44].

(b) A comparative statement showing the month-end retail prices of sugar at Super Bazar, Kendriya Bhandar and in the open market in Delhi during the years 1992 and 1993 is given in Annexure-II. [See Appendix 170, Annexure No 45].

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to refer to Annexure I. He has given a long reply, but to take one example, we will find that Postman refined groundnut oil is costing Rs. 58.10 per kg. This price is as on 6th of December. Again, taking the month of November, the price of groundnut oil, of course, unrefined—I must make that distinction—was Rs. 38 per kg. I would like to ask Why there is such a vast difference between the end product and the unrefined oil. Is it just because it has been processed?

SHRI A. K. ANTONY: Last December we gave answer to the question about edible oils being sold loose in the market. Here the question is about brand. Its price is decided by the manufacturer. The Government has no control on the prices decided by the manufacturers. They have their own reasons. Sometimes the cost of raw material is increased. Whatever it may be, the Government has no control over the price decided by the manufacturer.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Second supplementary.

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: My second supplementary is whether the same policy is being followed as regards export of the edible oils also ... only to make its presence felt in the country as in the case of sugar. I would like to know what the rationale of exporting edible oils is, because despite our efforts for the last eight or ten years we are still short of edible oils in the country.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY: The production of edible oil in the country is increasing year by year. Last year the production was much better compared to 1992. The Government, as a policy, allowed a small quantity of edible oil to be exported, especially of 1 kg. to 5 kg. consumer packs. We are closely monitoring the domestic price situation also. If any unfavourable situation arises, we will act to counter it.

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI: This question relates to two commodities. One is the edible oil and the other is sugar. If you just look at the prices, you will find that the prices of edible oil, particularly the brand oil, have been increasing. In the case of sugar you will notice a similar trend. In December 1992, its price was Rs. 9.70 per kilogram while during the same months in 1993 it was Rs. 13 per kilogram. So, it was a very steep rise in price. The hon. Minister has already said that there is a shortfall in sugar production. I learn from the statistics given by the Government in reply to Starred Q. No. 143 of 4th March, that sugar production is short by 15,54,790 tonnes. So, what steps is the Government going to take (a) to augment the sugar stocks and (b) to regulate the sugar price. In the case of sugar you cannot say you do not have any say about the sugar prices. There is a steep rise in the price of sugar with the shortfall in sugar and with the policy of exports, will the Government revive the entire policy towards export of these commodities and would take adequate steps to remove all these imbalances. I am asking this question because I expect the same situation will arise in the case of other agricultural commodities also. You are also

trying to import tea, I understand. So, what steps is the Government going to take to keep the consumer market well under control and to assure the supply of these things to the consumers at reasonable prices.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY: Regarding the last part of the question about the export, already my Hon. colleague has given a reply. Regarding the question about the increase in the price of sugar, I would like to say that the Government is concerned about it. In fact, during the last two years sugar production has come down. As a result there is an atmosphere of shortage throughout the country. Knowing it full well, the Government is taking all possible measures to increase sugarcane production. Unless the production of sugarcane increases substantially, our sugar production will not go up. Therefore, to give encouragement to the farmers, a substantial increase in the support price of sugarcane has been given. Two years ago the support price of sugarcane was Rs. 26; now it is Rs. 34.50. In spite of this increase, some of the hon. Members have been requesting the Commerce Minister to give more incentive to the sugarcane growers so that they will produce more and we will have plenty of sugar. That is the demand from one side. When we are giving more support price and when the sugarcane price is increased, naturally the levy sugar price will also increase. That is the problem. Anyway, during the last two years because of the steep increase in the Support price, the Government was compelled to increase the sugar price also. That is why there is an increase in the price of sugar in the market. We have to strike a balance. We have to encourage the farmers. We have to protect the interests of the farmers, and at the same time we have to see that the consumer are also protected. That is why the Government is taking a balanced view. I hope that the hon. Member will also appreciate that approach.

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI: Are you going to give more permissions to sugar mills? Unless you create the capacity, how can you convert the sugarcane into sugar?

SHRI A. K. ANTONY: This part is actually dealt with by the Food Ministry. You, please, put the question to the Food Ministry.

श्री मोहम्मद खलीलुर रहमान : जनाब वेयरमन साहब, इस सवाल के जरिए सिर्फ उन्हीं इलाकों यानी अर्बन एरियाज जो हैं वहां पर सुपर बाजार और केन्द्रीय भंडार के जरिए से जो डिफेंड प्राइसेज हैं उसके ताल्लुक से एडिबल आयल और सूगर के प्राइस तय किए गए हैं। मैं आनरेबल मिनिस्टर साहब से यह जानना चाहता हूं कि हमारे हिन्दुस्तान में अर्बन एरिया के मुकाबले में रूरल एरिया में काफी पापुलेशन रहती है वहां पर किस तरह से ये एडिबल आयल और सूगर वगैरह सप्लाई किए जाते हैं और फिर वहां का रेट जो इसमें नहीं बतलाया गया है, मैं यह आनरेबल मिनिस्टर साहब से जानना चाहता हूं ?

شری محمد خلیل الرحمن : جناب چیئر مین صاحب اس سوال کے ذریعہ صرف انھیں علاقوں یعنی اربن ایریاز جو ہیں وہاں پر سپر بازار اور کنٹرولڈ پرائس کے ذریعہ سے جو ڈیفینڈ پرائس ہیں اس کے تعلق سے ایڈیبل آئل اور سوگو کے پرائس طے کئے گئے ہیں۔ میں آنرہبل منسٹر صاحب سے یہ جانتا چاہتا ہوں کہ ہمارے ہندوستان میں اربن ایریا کے مقابلے میں رورل ایریا میں کافی پاپولیشن رہتی ہے وہاں پر کس طرح سے یہ ایڈیبل آئل اور سوگو وغیرہ کی سپلائی کئے جاتے ہیں اور پھر وہاں کاریٹ جو اس میں نہیں بتلایا گیا ہے۔ میں آنرہبل منسٹر صاحب سے جانتا چاہتا ہوں۔

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : As all the members know very well, we have a fairly wide network of the PDS outlets throughout the country. More than 4 lakh PDS shops are there throughout the country. At times of scarcity we are distributing edible oil through the PDS also. Apart from that, we have a large number of co-operative stores also throughout the country. The Super Bazar was formed to meet a special problem in Delhi. In 1965 the prices of essential commodities in Delhi, had set up like anything. Delhi is a place where the majority of the population belongs to the fixed-income group. To tackle such a situation, the Government at that time constituted the Super Bazar. The Super Bazar is still now confined only to Delhi. The Kendriya Bhandar, apart from Delhi, is having some outlets in other area also. So, the Super Bazar and the Kendriya Bhandar have been formed only to cater to the needs of certain sections. The Super Bazar caters only to the needs of Delhi. In other areas we have built over the years, a fairly large number of PDS outlets. If needed, we can increase the number of PDS outlets in the rural areas still further.

SHRI ASHOK MITRA : Sir, the fluctuations in the supply of sugar are not a new phenomenon. This has been happening over the past four decades. There are ups in the production and there are downs also. But what we are concerned with is the fact that the Government has seemingly lost interest in the distribution of sugar from the public distribution system. Reports from different parts of the country suggest that the supply of sugar through the fair-price shops has almost dried up. As far as my recollection goes till about the mid-70s as much as 65 per cent of the sugar that was released, was released to

the public distribution system, and only 35 per cent was released to the traders. Now the situation has been much more than reversed. I saw a newspaper item which suggested that in the last month the entire release was to the traders, and naturally the market prices have been affected. I know the Minister wants to apply his heart, but I also know that there are forces at work which would not allow him to apply his heart. I would humbly ask of the Minister whether he would do something to see that his heart rules over these other forces.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : Sir, regarding the distribution of sugar through the PDS, there is no shortage. We are continuously releasing and making regular supply of sugar to the PDS. On an average, 425 gm. of sugar is given per person. That is the average scale. So far, till this month, there has been no reduction in the distribution of levy sugar through the PDS. The policy of the Government is to see that at least a reasonable quantity of sugar is distributed through the PDS. We have no intention to stop that.

SHRI ASHOK MITRA : All I want to know is how the Government is going to implement the policy.

| SHRI A.K. ANTONY : The problem is that our agriculturists' are also becoming more and more intelligent. Whenever they feel that some crops are more profitable they are switching over to them.

SHRI SOM PAL : Don't say that they have become intelligent. Do you want them to be ignorant? It is an aspersion on the farmers. ... *(Interruptions)* ... Don't say that they have become intelligent.

MR. CHAIRMAN : There is no aspersion in it. If he says that they are more intelligent, what is the aspersion in it ? Mr. Minister, please go ahead.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI : You don't want farmers to be intelligent. ... *(Interruptions)* ...

MR. CHAIRMAN : Silence please.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : I am paying compliments to the Indian farmers. Previously they were ignorant. Whenever they feel that the second crops are more profit-able they would naturally switch over to those crops. For example, oilseeds. There are many other crops which they feel are more profitable. So they would switch over to those crops. That is the problem. It is an overall problem. The Central Government as well as the State Governments should jointly, in consultation with the agriculturist organisations and with all the interested parties, find an overall strategy so that the farmers can be encouraged. They should not be demoralised. Only then we can increase the production. That is the real problem regarding sugarcane. So we want to increase sugarcane production by giving more encouragement to farmers who want to cultivate sugarcane. That is why we have increased the support price in the last two years. Now, on the one side, all of us demand we should give more incentives to the farmers ; on the other side, we say, "Don't increase the sugar price." It is difficult for the Government. We should understand the difficulty of the Government also. I can understand the concern of the hon. Members regarding increase of sugar price. At the same time, I can also understand the concern of other Members regarding the plight of the farmers. The Government will have to strike a balance between the two. We have to take a balanced view. The Government is trying to take that view. I am appreciating farmers. I am not casting any aspersion on them.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Q. No. 164.

गैर-बासमती सुपर फाइन चावल के लिए न्यूनतम निर्यात मूल्य

*164. श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज :

डा० जितेन्द्र कुमार जैन :

क्या वाणिज्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

प्रश्न में यह प्रश्न श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज द्वारा पूछा गया है।

(क) क्या यह सच है कि देश से गैर-बासमती सुपर फाइन चावल के निर्यात हेतु सरकार ने न्यूनतम निर्यात मूल्य निर्धारित किया है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो वित्तीय वर्ष 1993-94 के दौरान ये मूल्य कितनी बार तथा कितने-कितने घोषित किये गये थे;

(ग) क्या यह भी सच है कि ये मूल्य देश सुपर फाइन चावल के मूल्य से काफी कम हैं;

(घ) यदि हां, तो इस संबंध में व्यौरा क्या है;

(ङ) क्या इस मूल्य पर चावल के निर्यात से विदेशी व्यापार में आर्थिक हानि हो रही है; और

(च) यदि हां, तो वर्ष 1993-94 में कितनी हानि होने का अनुमान है ?

नागरिक आपूर्ति उपसोक्तता मामले और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्रालय में राज्यमंत्री और वाणिज्य मंत्रालय के राज्यमंत्री (श्री कमासुद्दीन अहमद) :

(क) से (च) : एक विवरण पत्र सभा पटल पर रख दिया गया है।

सभा में यह प्रश्न श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज द्वारा पूछा गया था।

विवरण

(क) और (ख) : अति उत्तम गैर-बासमती चावल के लिए न्यूनतम निर्यात कीमत (एमईपी) वर्तमान वित्तीय वर्ष में तीन बार अधिसूचित की गई है, विवरण निम्नलिखित है :

तारीख	न्यूनतम निर्यात कीमत (प्रति मीट्रिक टन सं० रा० अ० डालर)
1. 22-4-1993	250
2. 10-8-1993	225
3. 3-1-1994	200