

Fertilizer price

*125. SHRI RAMNARAYAN GOSWAMI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the domestic price of fertilizer most of the times remains higher than the international price; and

(b) if so, what are the steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government to bring down prices in the domestic market?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI CHINTA MOHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise. However, the question whether there is any scope for reduction in the prices of fertilizers is one of the terms of reference of Parliament Committee on Fertilizer Pricing.

SHRI RAMNARAYAN GOSWAMI: Sir, my question was "whether it is a fact that the domestic price of fertilizer most of the times remains higher than the international price". The Minister in his reply has flatly denied the fact. I would like to draw the attention of the Minister to an article, written by Shri Bhanu Pratap Singh who was the Chairman of a high-powered Committee on Agricultural Policies and Programmes, which appeared on 23rd January, 1992 in the *Times of India* wherein it has been stated:

"Fertilizer prices in India have most of the time been above their international prices. In recent years, in spite of huge subsidies said to have been paid to fertiliser manufacturers, farmers in India, compared to elsewhere had to sell considerably more of their wheat and paddy to buy one kilo of nitrogen, phosphate and potash"

Now after slashing down the subsidy on fertilisers farmers have to pay more. For this year the fertilizer Department has estimated a deficit of 13 lakh tonnes of DAP and 10 lakh tonnes of urea. The Government has directed the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation to import 6 lakh tonnes of DAP and 4 lakh tonnes of urea.

Last year the Government had to import...

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is your question?

SHRI RAMNARAYAN GOSWAMI: Sir, I am just coming to my specific question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can't have such a long preface for a supplementary.

SHRI RAMNARAYAN GOSWAMI: Last year the Government had to import 27.50 lakh tonnes of NPK. My specific supplementary is this. This implies that the domestic production fails to meet the internal demand; that is why we are importing fertilisers from abroad. I would like to know the purchase price of DAP and urea per tonne, excluding carrying charges and from which country the Government has imported or is going to import.

SHRI CHINTA MOHAN: Sir, I can't say from which country we are going to import. It is the Ministry of Commerce which will decide. For last year, I will check up with the Commerce Ministry and give you the note, Sir. I will also write to him. (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI RAMNARAYAN GOSWAMI: Sir, he has actually evaded my question. Last year they had imported a large amount of fertilisers from abroad. And they don't know the price! Actually he is evading my questions... (*Interruptions*)... Actually he does not want to divulge the actual position.

Part (b) of my supplementary is this. The Minister said in his reply that a Parliamentary Committee on Fertiliser Pricing has been formed. It means that the Government has the intention to reduce the fertiliser price. That is, at present the fertiliser price is very high in the sense that it fails to be commensurate with the purchasing power of the farmers. I want to know from the hon. Minister why the domestic price of fertiliser is very high. It is beyond the capacity of the farmers to purchase. Is it due to high cost of raw materials such as coal, naphtha, natural gas and electricity supplied by Coal India, Indian Oil Corporation, Gas Authority of India Limited, ONGC, NTPC and SPBs respectively, through administered price hike? Secondly, is it due to high cost of imported raw materials such as rock phosphate, sulphur etc.? Thirdly, is it due to increase in railway freights and withdrawal of fertilizer subsidy by 30% effected from last year?

SHRI CHINTA MOHAN : We are not hiding anything. We are very transparent. Last year we have imported roughly about ...
(Interruptions)

श्री ईश बत्त यादव : जितना इनका प्रश्न है उतना जवाब मंत्री जी का आना चाहिए, मंत्री जी तो कोई जवाब ही नहीं दे रहे हैं।

SHRI CHINTA MOHAN : We have imported about three million tonnes of nutrients last year. From which country, if the Member wants it, I will write to him. (Interruptions) About the cost of production, it differs from factory to factory. It all depends on whether the unit is based on coal, naphtha or gas. If it is a gas-based unit the cost of production of fertilizer is very less. For example, in IFFCO, Kalol the urea retention price per tonne is about Rs. 2,820. In Talcher Unit of Fertilizer Corporation of India which is coal-based for the same urea

the retention price is about Rs. 6,147. The cost differs from factory to factory within India. There are so many other factors like the cost of raw materials which has gone up. With so many factors adding together the cost of production has gone up. The average cost of urea today is about Rs. 3,800 per tonne whereas DAP is about Rs. 8,000 per tonne.

श्री राम नरेश यादव : महोदय, फर्टिलाइजर हमारे किसानों के लिए और देश के लिए उत्पादन का एक जबर्दस्त आधार है और उसके परिणामस्वरूप यदि किसानों के सामने कठिनाई आती है तो उसके असर से जिस प्रकार से कृषि उत्पादन में वृद्धि होनी चाहिए, वह भी नहीं हो पाती, यद्यपि कृषि उत्पादन में काफी वृद्धि हुई है और देश आत्मनिर्भर हो गया है। मैं इस संबंध में यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो हमारे यहां हिन्दुस्तान फर्टिलाइजर कारपोरेशन और फर्टिलाइजर कारपोरेशन आफ इंडिया हैं, क्योंकि हमारे देश के अंदर इस समय प्रोडक्शन हो रहा है एक करोड़ टन का और खपत हो रही है एक करोड़ पच्चीस लाख टन की, तो यह जो कमी है उसे पूरा करने के लिए सरकार को आयात करना ही पड़ता है। इस संदर्भ में मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो अपने यहां के फर्टिलाइजर कारखाने हैं, जैसे गोरखपुर का प्लांट है जो करीब तीन साल से बंद है, एक हेल्थ कमेटी भी बनी थी जांच करने के लिए और उसकी भी रिपोर्ट सरकार के पास आई है, तो मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि इस समय जिस प्रकार से किसानों के लिए खाद की उपयोगिता बढ़ रही है और उसका उपभोग जिस तरह से बढ़ा है और खाद के उत्पादन का लक्ष्य जिस तरह से गिरा है उसको ध्यान में रखते हुए हिन्दुस्तान फर्टिलाइजर कारपोरेशन और फर्टिलाइजर कारपोरेशन आफ इंडिया के तहत हमारे जो कारखाने हैं खाद के, जैसे गोरखपुर में है, तो उसको ठीक ढंग से चलाने के बारे में सरकार कोई व्यवस्था करेगी ताकि उत्पादन में वृद्धि हो सके? उत्पादन में यदि वृद्धि हो

सकेगी तो बाजार में जो दाम चढ़ते जाते हैं, वे नहीं बढ़ पायेंगे। यही मैं जानना चाहता हूँ।

श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह : चिन्ता जी को कोई चिन्ता नहीं है।

SHRI CHINTA MOHAN : Sir, today we are producing about 9 million tonnes of fertilizer in the country and there is a shortfall of 3 million tonnes.

MR. CHAIRMAN : His question is only about Gorakhpur. Be precise. You tell him about Gorakhpur.

SHRI CHINTA MOHAN : We need about 12 million tonnes of fertilizer nutrients today. He is asking about Gorakhpur. The Prime Minister is also very keen that the unit ... (Interruptions)

श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह : सभापति जी, आज प्रधान मंत्री का दिन है लेकिन प्रधान मंत्री ने एक जवाब भी नहीं दिया।

श्री सभापति : जवाब देने दो भाई। इन्हें आप जवाब देने दोजिए।

SHRI CHINTA MOHAN : The HFC and FCI are all sick units based on old technology. He is particularly referring to Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh. In Gorakhpur we are trying... (Interruptions)...

श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह : सभापति जी, आज प्रधान मंत्री जी का दिन है लेकिन प्रधान मंत्री जी ने एक जवाब भी नहीं दिया है। कोई मंत्री उनका जो फिक्स है, उत्तर नहीं दे रहे हैं, उसको भी वे नहीं सुधार रहे हैं।

SHRI CHINTA MOHAN : We have constituted a committee. We have asked the committee to give its report. The committee has 16 RS—2.

given its report. We are trying to send this to... (Interruptions)

श्री राम नरेश यादव : सभापति जी, मेरे प्रश्न का उत्तर नहीं आया। यह उत्तर नहीं है।

12.00 Noon

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO) : I have received strong representations from Members of Parliament in regard to the Gorakhpur unit. We have asked for a special report and we would like to take quick measures to turn it around because I have been told that more than any other unit there are greater possibilities of turning around this unit.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Question Hour is over.

[The Deputy Chairman in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWER TO SHORT NOTICE QUESTION NO. 1

Discontentment among employees due to retrenchment policy

SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the frustration and discontentment among the Government employees due to the retrenchment policy being implemented by Government;

(b) whether Government have decided to lower the retirement age of their employees;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether Government have drawn any a phased programme to implement the decision; and if so, the details thereof?