

[The Deputy Chairman in the Chair]

... (Interruptions) ...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order please.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI (Maharashtra): NTR also should resign.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY (Andhra Pradesh): Why he should resign? ... (Interruptions) ... Let Mr. Rajiv Gandhi resign first.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: If it is true what Mr. P. N. Sukul has said, then, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi should emulate him.

SHRI P. N. SUKUL: NTR should follow suit.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Rajesh Pilot.

MOTION FOR ELECTION TO THE NATIONAL WELFARE BOARD FOR SEAFARERS

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): Madam, I move the following Motion:—

"That in pursuance of clause (i) of rule 4 of the National Welfare Board for Seafarers Rules, 1963, as amended, made under sub-section (2) of section 218 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 (44 of 1958), this House do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Chairman may direct, one Member from among the Members of the House, to be a Member of the National Welfare Board for Seafarers."

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

MOTION FOR ELECTION TO THE SREE CHITRA TIRUNAL INSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY, TRIVANDRUM

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): Madam, on behalf of Shri K. R. Narayanan, I move the following Motion:—

"That in pursuance of clause (i) of section 5 read with sub-section (4) of section 6 of the Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology, Trivandrum, Act, 1980, this House do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Chairman may direct, one Member from among the Members of the House to be a Member of Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology, Trivandrum in the vacancy caused by the retirement of Shri K. Mohanan from the Membership of the Rajya Sabha on 1st July, 1988."

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MOTION OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Rise in the prices of essential commodities

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, calling attention.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY (Tamil Nadu): Madam, I am on a point of order.*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Not allowed. Not permitted. It is not going on record.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: *

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He has not been permitted. It is not going on record. No, no.

*Not recorded.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Madam Deputy Chairman
.... (Interruptions)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is not going on record. Please sit down.
.... (Interruptions)

Shri Chitta Basu.

SHRI CHITTA BASU (West Bengal): Madam Deputy Chairman, with your kind permission, I rise to call the attention of the Minister of Food and Civil Supplies to the rise in prices of essential commodities and the steps taken by the Government in the matter.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI SUKHAM RAM): Madam Deputy Chairman...
.... (Interruptions)

डॉ० रत्नाकर पाण्डेय (उत्तर प्रदेश) :
उपसभापति महोदया, मेरा आप से एक अनुरोध है। आपने आदेश दिया था कि मंत्रियों के वक्तव्य अंग्रेजी के साथ साथ हिन्दी में भी मिलेंगे। लेकिन आज का वक्तव्य हिन्दी में नहीं है। यह आपके आदेश की अवहेलना है और राष्ट्रभाषा हिन्दी का अपमान भी है। मेरा आपसे अनुरोध है कि आप पुनः आदेश दें कि इस प्रकार के वक्तव्य हिन्दी और अंग्रेजी, दोनों में दिये जायें और अगर दोनों में न हों तो न दिये जायें।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You see, the copies are available in Hindi also and those who want to have the Hindi version, they can have it.

SHRI SUKHAM RAM: Madam, the Government shares the concern of Hon'ble Members of the House about the rising trend in the prices of Essential Commodities though during the current year so far the general price rise has been lower than that of last few years. The price rise has also to be viewed in the context of the 1987 drought of exceptional severity.

The latest wholesale price data are available for the week ending 23rd July, 1988. So far in the current financial year i.e. past 17 weeks ending 23rd July, 1988, the wholesale price index has moved up by 3.4 per cent while during the same 17 weeks last year it had moved up by 6.5 per cent. In fact, this is the lowest increase in the last 5 years. The annual rate of inflation has come down to 7.5 per cent in the week end 23rd July, 1988 from 10.6 per cent in the terminal week of 1987-88.

Hon'ble Members will appreciate that the country witnessed one of the worst droughts of the century last year. Usually, the impact of drought on prices and availability of essential commodities is felt in the year of drought and the year following it. On account of timely measures taken to manage demand and supply there has been a substantially lower price rise in 1987-88 as compared to the rise in prices in earlier drought years. In 1987-88, the Wholesale Price Index moved up by 10.6 per cent while in 1979-80 the increase in Wholesale Price Index was to the extent of 21.4 per cent. Moreover, the availability of essential commodities, particularly that of foodgrains was ensured all over the country including the worst drought affected States of Rajasthan and Gujarat. Even these days the availability of essential commodities is by and large satisfactory.

Broadly speaking, the various measures taken by the Central and State Governments relate to (i) increase in production and availability (ii) expansion and improvement of the public distribution system (iii) stringent enforcement and (iv) intensified monitoring at various levels. Since August 1987, 7572 new Fair Price Shops have been opened taking the total to 3.47 lakhs. 231 mobile vans have been added during the same period. The lifting of key essential commodities, like foodgrains, imported edible oils and kerosene has been

higher. As a consequence of intensified implementation of the relevant provisions of the Essential Commodities Act, since August, 1987, 78423 raids have been conducted and goods valued at more than Rs. 35 crores have been seized.

We are passing through the lean period of May-October during which there is a tendency for the prices of various essential commodities, particularly to that of kharif crops, to move up even in normal years. The commodities which come under pressure include foodgrains, pulses, vegetables and fruits. Fortunately, as Hon'ble Members are aware, we have had widespread rains so far all over the country. This has improved the prospects for the Kharif crops very substantially. It is expected that as a consequence of increase in production of various Kharif crops the prices of essential commodities will come down and the supply situation will improve in the coming weeks.

Government is keeping a continuous watch on the prices and availability of essential commodities in association with the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations. It will not hesitate to take more measures as and when the situation demands.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Madam, the statement, to begin with, does not reflect the real situation regarding the prices and the non-availability of essential commodities in certain segments. Madam, I think you will agree with me that we are facing today an abnormal and also alarming price rise. Never had there been any occasion when there had been such a kind of steep rise of prices of essential commodities. It has surpassed all the past records. In this situation, the poorer and the poorest sections of the society and hit the hardest while the richer sections of the society, particularly the traders, the capitalists and the landlords, are reaping the benefits of the situation.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI (Maharashtra): They are happy?

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Yes, Madam, even today, the statement has underestimated the rate of inflation. I have got one press clipping dated 26.7.1988 in which it has been stated that Delhi, Calcutta, Nagpur, Bangalore and many other cities have registered double digit inflation for the twelve-month period ending May 1988 while in Bombay the inflation was marginally lower than the all-India average of 9.7 per cent. Even today we have seen that the Government has declared an increase in the dearness allowance of Central Government employees. And in the announcement of the increase in the dearness allowance, a very important figure has also come out. The consumer price index for industrial workers for June rose by eleven per cent and stood at a record point of 782. This pushed up the average index for the twelve months ending June 1988 to 752.75, 23.8 per cent above 608. The statement made now is contradictory with the statement given by the Central Government announcing the dearness allowance increase. This statement has given figures which are marked much lower than what has been admitted by the Government of India. There has been some increase on other items also. I have a list here from which you will find the range of essential commodities which are now showing abnormal rise in prices. I am giving you only a small list. The prices of pulses went up by 35 per cent. Edible oil went up by 24 per cent, foodgrains by 16 per cent, rice by 13 per cent, wheat by 15 per cent, jawar by 32 per cent and bajra by 10 per cent during this brief period. And the effect of this price rise is devastating, as you can well imagine. In the course of his statement the honourable Minister mentioned about supply side which has been announced by the Government. It appears that the Government now relies on the supply side economy. And even on that count I will come to prove that this Government has failed and has failed denorably and miserably. I give you some examples and I

[Shri Chitta Basu]

begin with West Bengal from where I come. In regard to foodgrains West Bengal has a deficit of about 22 lakh MTs of foodgrains. Government has not fully compensated for this deficit right from the beginning. The normal quota for supply of wheat and rice to the State is 1.25 lakh tonnes of rice and 1.25 lakh tonnes of wheat. This had been the earlier allotment. I do not know what the honourable Minister will say, for this year for the first three-four months the allotment of 1.25 lakh tonnes has been drastically reduced to 80,000 tonnes, less than the previous allotment; I do not know why. I also heard him say only a couple of days back that West Bengal could not lift the consignment. This is untrue; this is false. The allotment of even 80,000 tonnes was only on paper; it was only a paper allotment. There is no physical delivery; physical delivery is not ensured. Even for the month of August I am informed by the Government that so far delivery instructions have been given only for 40,000 tonnes instead of 80,000 tonnes, and they are waiting to give delivery instructions for the next week if some 40,000 tonnes of rice is imported from Thailand. I shall come to that position later. Therefore, my complaint is that even in the supply side economy the Government could not perform its responsibility. It could not ensure physical delivery of the allotment. This is the situation not only in regard to rice and wheat alone. Take the case of levy sugar. In 1986 West Bengal's requirement was 4.80 lakh tonnes. And what was the allotment? Three lakh six thousand tonnes. And what was the actual supply, physical delivery? What is the physical delivery? It was only 2.95 000 tonnes. This also is in relation to 1986 and that is the case also in relation to 1987 and up till now. So far as the question of levy cement is concerned the supply was 1.49 lakh tonnes while the actual delivery was only 43,000 tonnes or something like that. Now, I come

to the other things also.

So far as coal is concerned, the requirement of the State of West Bengal is one lakh tonnes, the allotment has been only 80,000 tonnes and the actual physical delivery is just 60,000 tonnes only. Then I refer to the case of kerosene oil. The requirement of the State is 80,000 tonnes, the allotment is 50 to 52 thousand tonnes and the physical delivery is much less than that.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: My information is that the West Bengal Government has not lifted it.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Madam, he is interrupting me and I want to answer him. His case is, the Minister's case is, that the Government of West Bengal could not lift the allotted quantities. I contest this point on the basis of the information given to me by the State Government of West Bengal. Yes, the allotment was on paper only. The allotment was on paper. Due to the non-availability of rakes, due to the malfunctioning of the railways and other modes of transport, actual delivery, physical delivery, was much less than what was allotted. Therefore, it is an allotment on paper. Where is the physical delivery? We are not interested in having an allotment on paper. We are more interested, the hungry stomachs are more interested, in having some morsels of food. That is the position.

Madam, from these figures it will be clear that the allotment is only on paper and that the delivery is not in tune with the paper allotment. Now, this Government, which relies on the supply-side economics, has itself increased the prices. For your knowledge and information, I would like to tell that during the period 1981-86—I will come to 1987 later on—the price of rice has been raised six times, the price of wheat eight times, the price of sugar seven times and the price of kerosene oil ten times. Now, you can understand who is responsible for the rise in prices of essential commodities. Who is

responsible? They are responsible and it is proved by these facts and figures.

Madam, the Government has assured in this statement that with better harvests which they expect the prices of the essential commodities, particularly foodgrains, will be coming down. But the question of procurement comes in now. You will be surprised to know that the procurement of wheat for the current year has been less than the target. I will give you only two or three figures. The target for the year was one crore tonnes and the procurement has been only 65.10 lakh tonnes and this is much lower than the procurement made last year. Last year, it was 78.70 lakh tonnes. Therefore, the procurement also is less. There is a shortfall of 35 lakh tonnes. Therefore, prices of foodgrains also will be going up in the open market due to the non-availability of food stocks to be supplied to the ration shops. Then the buffer stocks have declined. As far as my information goes—I have got no access to official information—it has reached a low level. You kindly see the management at the supply side. When the procurement has declined, when the buffer stock has got depleted, the Government has exported rice to foreign countries. Sir, it has not only exported rice to foreign countries but it has also sold away at reduced prices, rice and wheat to private traders to satisfy them. Is it the way? Is it ensuring cheaper prices for the hungry men of our country? (*Inter-ruptions*)

Madam, the agricultural production has declined in the last year to 138 million tonnes. Now the target has been fixed for the year at 165 million tonnes. There is many a slip between the cup and the lip and, therefore, there are doubts that it may not be possible to reach the target of 165 million tonnes. (*Time bell rings*). Madam, these are certain illustrative facts with regard to the failure of the Government regarding the supply.

There are other sides also of the price rise. (*Time bell rings*). I will take another five minutes.

Now, according to the Centre of Monitoring India Economy, there are three broad factors for the rise in prices: One, fall in the production of certain agricultural commodities; two, deficit in the Central budget; and three, rising Government expenditure. Madam, I shall not take much time because it is not a Budget discussion, but it is necessary to mention something about it. In this connection, I would only read out a portion of the C&AG Report very recently placed before the Parliament, on July 29 last. I read from that Report:

"The revenue deficit has zoomed from Rs. 293 crores in 1981-82 to Rs. 7579 crores in 1986-87. The projected deficit is Rs. 8496 crores for 1987-88 and Rs. 9842 crores for 1988-89."

"From the beginning of the Sixth Plan till 1986-87, non-developmental expenditure has been growing at 19.2 per cent per annum against 17.4 per cent expenditure for development."

"As such, the scope for rigorous pruning of wasteful expenditure, both developmental and non-developmental, especially the latter, should be explored."

Then, it goes on to say:

"It noted that while revenue receipts have grown at an average of 17.2 per cent since 1980-81, expenditure has grown at an average rate of 18.3 per cent over the same period."

The reports also adds:

"The long-term fiscal policy could not achieve a better alignment between receipt of expenditure."

Madam, this very report also substantiates the charge which we have been

[Shri Chitta Basu] making all along that it is the fiscal and economic policy of the Government of India which leads to the further rise of prices. This is the most shocking explanation of the price rise. But, unfortunately, Madam, I have my Kerala friends around me. (Time bell rings)..

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude. (Interruptions).

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Therefore, the price rise is due to the fiscal and economic policies—wrong, anti-people and disastrous economic and fiscal policies—pursued by the Government. They conveniently forget about it. If they have adopted a policy of inflationary economy, then it may have its impact on the essential commodities and other things. Madam, I would only mention about the administered prices. You know that there has been a hike in the administered prices of levy sugar, coal, steel, diesel and petrol and this hike amounted to Rs. 1600 crores. The increase in railway fares, freight charges, postal rates, telephone charges, etc. was of the order of Rs. 1171 crores. Over and above these things there has been an imposition of indirect taxes to the tune of Rs. 1265 crores. (Time bell rings).

Madam, I will make one point more and then I will finish. It is about the increasing incidence of indirect taxes. Between 1950-51 and 1987-88, the tax revenue has gone up 90 times including centre, States and the Union Territories. The tax increase is 90 times. The indirect taxes have gone up by 132 times. Madam, you will shudder to think that while the direct taxes have been increased only by 24 times. You have followed a fiscal policy which increases the indirect taxes by about 132 times. Your fiscal policy allows an increase in direct taxes by only 24 times. As a result, the share of the indirect taxes has risen from 63.2 per cent in 1950-51 to 87.1 per cent in 1987-88. These are the fiscal policies and these are the economic policies which have led to the abnormal and unprecedented

rise in prices. Therefore, my question would be whether the Government would increase the allotment to the States. I would particularly mention West Bengal, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: Why not Maharashtra?

SHRI CHITTA BASU: I would also include Maharashtra in the list in honour of my friend. He should not only increase the allotment of foodgrains and other essential commodities, but the physical delivery should also be ensured. I again repeat that the physical delivery should be ensured. The Ministry of the Union Government should announce the policy of statutory fixation of prices of essential commodities all over the country and ensure the supply of those essential commodities through the Public Distribution System. Madam, I want to emphasise that that is the only way. The statutory fixation of prices and the delivery of essential commodities through the Public Distribution System would help us in our fight against price rise even if you don't change the fiscal and economic policy. I won't ask the Minister to change the fiscal and economic policies at the moment. I would ask the Minister whether he would assure the House about the fixing of statutory prices of essential commodities and make them available through the Public Distribution System.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Madam Deputy Chairman, when Mr. S. B. Chavan assumed office as Minister of Finance, these were his first words...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will request the hon. Members to be very brief because there is a very long list of Members who want to speak and the Minister has to reply at 1.15 P.M. The Members should try to be brief. It is no use my ringing the bell.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Whenever you ring the bell, I will immediately obey your orders, Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let me see what you do now.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Mr. Chavan has admitted that the first vital issue and the challenging task facing him is the control of prices.

Madam, I do not want to repeat the statistics given by my esteemed friend, Mr. Chitta Basu which have established—and also refuted—the statement given by the hon. Minister—that the Government has failed in this sphere of controlling prices. It is incapable of controlling the soaring prices, particularly the sharp rise in the prices of essential commodities and groceries. The common man is struggling to make both the ends meet. The concern is mainly from the housewives of the middle-class. Madam, I can quote what the reaction is in your State of Maharashtra. It is the worry and the concern of the women from the middle-class. They say that basic commodities have become unaffordable and securing two square meals is becoming difficult even for the middle-class. Madam, nowadays, the paediatricians say that children grow up throughout the country with calcium deficiency because the housewives could not afford to purchase milk. The price of milk has gone up so high that they cannot think of getting milk. Madam, there is enough evidence that 20 per cent of inflation is already present in the country, and it is increasing. The middle-class kitchen shelf threatens to bear an empty look. The basic items which a common man consumes have become at least 20 per cent dearer during the last one year. Madam, I could quote from a survey made by the 'Economic Times' which appeared on 13th July this year. As per this report, on 27th July, 1988, they have made a survey. I do not want to quote all the details but only those which are very important for this discussion. I would like to quote what the report said: The price of rice, the variation in the price of rice over the previous year has in-

creased. Of course, there is a decrease by 3 per cent over the previous month, i.e. over the month of June. But, according to the study that is made, over the previous year, there is an increase by 21.7 per cent. In the case of wheat the increase is of 10.3 per cent. In the case of jowar, of course, there is no increase and the status quo is maintained. The increase in the price over the previous year is: Gram—66.7 per cent; Bajra—15 per cent; Masoor — 16.3 per cent; Ginger—15.4 per cent; yarn—33.7 per cent; jute — 22.9 per cent; gur—17.7 per cent; sugar — 18.6 per cent. Madam, when sugar and cement have registered an all-time record production, it is very strange and also alarming that the prices of sugar and cement are increasing. That shows how the monopolies control the industry. The cane-grower is not getting the benefit, the consumer is also worse-affected and he suffers the increased prices. But the middlemen, the traders and the monopolies are getting the benefit and they are controlling the industry. Therefore, Madam, the prices of essential commodities are increasing uncontrollably. Of course, fruits and vegetable prices moved up by 5.1 per cent during the year, less than half of the increase when it is compared to last year. The prices of fruits and vegetables have come down but the prices of milk and other commodities and the groceries has gone high. Madam, what happened to the stocks? The foodstocks have got depleted. That shows mismanagement, poor handling of the economic affairs by this Government. Targets were announced, but we are not able to reach the targets. So, the seeds of economic crisis are being planted. It is a warning. If you look at the whole problem, the reason for the failure to achieve the targets, it is simple. This country after four decades of Independence we are not able to give power to any sector, industries of all categories, agricultural sector, farm sector. We are not able to give electricity and power. That is the main

[Shri V. Gopalsamy]

reason, Madam. After 1917 Revolution, Lenin said this and mark these words: Give me electricity and I will show you prosperity. This government has not planned. Of course we had our Five Year Plans but in this sphere of providing electricity and power this Government has miserably failed (*Time bell rings*). When you look at China of course they have got their own indigenous methods and gohar gas and so many other experiments with which they have solved this problem of power. But here this Government which is in saddle, they are not concerned about this power of electricity, they are concerned about the power of remaining in office and retaining the seat of power. That is the main problem. Therefore, Madam, as you have already instructed that as soon as you ring the Bell, I should obey your orders, today, Madam, I concede your orders.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Today only?

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Then only I can get some concession tomorrow or day after. Therefore, once again I urge this Government to take steps to have enough food stocks and also to control the sugar monopolists so that the middle class is saved and protected from the crisis.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Gopalsamy. Now, Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta, I hope he will be equally disciplined.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA (West Bengal): Madam Chairperson, price movement is the heart-beat of the economy as a whole. Therefore, a discussion on price movement is bound to be a discussion on the economic policies pursued by the Government. Therefore, in the beginning only I say that this Government that rules the country, has brought about unprecedented liabilities, both domestic and foreign and these unprecedented liabilities are bound to

have their impact on the price level. This is a Government which is indulging in reckless borrowing and, at the same time, senseless import and the whole process pushes up the price spiral. This is a Government which incites inflation by its own action and conducts through administrative manipulation. Therefore, this Government can be accused of breeding inflation itself. This is a Government having a wide open budget and this is a Government which seeks to hide the budgetary gap by window-dressing and this wide open budget brings about incitement to the price spiral of the country. This is a Government of decreasing economic viability and as a result of the actions of the Government, the real wage of the worker declines; at the same time, dividend of the private corporate sector is pushed up. This is a Government following a policy leading the country to bankruptcy and insolvency, and the effect of the bankruptcy and insolvency is only reflected in the double-digit inflation that the country faces today. Therefore, to put an end to inflation and to control inflation, what is necessary is radical recasting of the economic policy of the Government that it is pursuing at the moment. Madam, inflation rate, at the moment, is 10.6 per cent; this is a double-digit inflation, and according to economists and economic thinking, double-digit inflation is a run-away inflation, galloping inflation, having a tremendous impact on the living standards of the common people. As a woman, Madam, you can understand more than anybody else, where the shoe pinches, because the woman has to manage the household and do the household budgeting. I shall not go into the statistics because statistics are telling more than the statement of the Minister. The statistics say that wholesale price index has reached 432.8 — all-time high. It says that the real value of the money has declined to all-time low — 13 paise; somebody says it is 11 paise.

The movement of price is reflected mainly in the movement of the prices of foodstuffs, that is the essential consumption ingredient of the people. Madam, what is the rate of increase of the wholesale prices? The rate of increase in wholesale price at the moment is 8.9 in the first quarter of the current year while the rate of increase in the corresponding period of last year was 5.49, which means, the efficiency of the Government has reached the level where it has been able to push up the price spiral by 3.41, and that is, Madam, the achievement for the Government. I, therefore, request you to consider it and recommend to the Government whether they can award Bharat Ratna to the people who are shaping the economic policy of the Government. Madam, the impact of increase in prices has been greatest in the food sector; it is 19.1 per cent. This is the horrible feature of the economic policy that the Government is pursuing. What are the reasons for it? The reason for it in the main, I should say, is the lack of responsibility of the Government. May I point out that even the prospect of a good crop, even a good harvest that is in the offing because of God's gift, rain, has not changed or altered the market because market operation does not depend upon the vagaries of nature, as the Minister says; it depends on the sweetwill of the speculator. The market belongs to the seller, not the buyer. The Government has handed over the economic market to, what we call, speculators and manipulators; it is not the market to operate according to material forces' interaction. The consumer price index only gives the extent of the economy the people of our country are losing. The consumer price index has increased in the current period by 10.4 per cent. In the previous year, in the corresponding period, it was 7.5. Who is to bear the brunt of the runaway inflation generated by the disastrous economic policy of the Government? You cannot hold the price-line, but you can freeze the wage. The inflation is gal-

lopping but the Bureau of Public Enterprises has issued a circular to all the departments that there cannot be an increase, under any circumstance, of the wage by more than 10 per cent. Therefore, this is the Government which incites price rise; this is the Government which freezes the wage; this is the Government which gives greatest dividend to private corporate sector. The reason responsible for the present disaster of the economy, or the crush of the economy, is the reckless import. That is number one. Then, it is the senseless liability that the Government is creating at the moment, the boundless borrowing it is undertaking at the moment and the wide open Budget that it has framed. The gap in the Budget, in the last Budget, has been Rs. 10,000 crores, much more than what the Government claimed that it would be.

Madam, what has been the effect of reckless imports? This Government is importing wheat from America when, because of drugs, the price of American wheat has gone up. This Government is importing wheat from America by paying extraordinary shipping rates instead of imposing levy on the affluent peasantry of the country. This Government is afraid of procurement. This Government is not restoring to procurement because of its political allegiance to the landed gentry. But this Government is ready to spend hard-earned foreign exchange to import higher-priced American wheat. This Government is importing fertilisers when there is a glut in the fertiliser industry in the country. This Government is importing capital goods from outside when most of the leading industrial units belonging to the public sector are working below their normal capacity. Therefore, Madam, these reckless imports lead to reckless foreign debt. (*Time bell rings*) Reckless foreign debt leads to reckless price rise and reckless price rise makes the living standard of the

[Shri Gurudas Das Gupta]

people thoroughly reckless. The liabilities of the Government, both domestic and foreign, have definitely their impact on the price line. The liabilities have increased by three times over a span of five years. The total liabilities of the Government between 1981-82 and 1986-87 have increased by 179 per cent. Imagine the increase in the liabilities. (*Time bell rings*) The foreign liabilities of the Government have increased by three times. At the present moment, 64 per cent of the gross national product accounts for the liabilities that India holds today. A time may come when India will be producing for the repayment of loans and servicing of debt instead of producing food and clothing for the common population of the country. (*Interruptions*)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: This is the basic cause of inflation. This is the disaster that the Government has brought about. Therefore, without ascertaining the basic and fundamental causes and the reasons for inflation, there cannot be a discussion. There can be a discussion on the extent of price rise. But we will have to go into the basic reasons for it.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Coming to the end of my speech on the basic economic policies, I would like the Government to tell us whether it is going to stop these reckless imports. These reckless imports are leading to inflation. I would like the Government to tell us whether the Government is ready to put an end to the wasteful uneconomic expenditure. I would like the Government to tell us whether it is ready to check inflation and to get rid of the speculators and manipulators. I would like the Government to tell us whether it is ready to build

up a sufficient buffer stock of foodgrains through procurement and levy, through internal procurement, and not resort to reckless imports of foodgrains from foreign countries. I would like the Government to tell us whether it is going to build up an efficient public distribution system throughout the country. Without this, any talk of anti-inflationary steps will be meaningless. Without this, any effective steps to check inflation will be thoroughly useless. Therefore, it is time for the Government to act. There should be no patch-up, no shortsighted or short-term measures. These cannot control the runaway inflation which has gripped the nation. Therefore, it is necessary that the Government takes decisive measures to control inflation and get rid of the speculators and monopoly traders in the country. Thank you, Madam.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY (Andhra Pradesh): Madam, at the outset let me associate myself with my colleague who has spoken very explicitly on the economic factors for the price rise of essential commodities. I do not want to go into black and white; I am not going into statistical reports which are presented to the House. I am not going to refer to any thing other than the sentiments of a housewife. I will only speak from the simplistic approach of what an average housewife in this nation is today facing. She cannot understand what Parliament in this country is deciding. When we are going with our husbands' pay packets and are unable even to feed, clothe and house our children, that is the crux of essential commodities as I see it on behalf of the wives and women of this country.

Madam, it is not enough for us to talk about implementing a public distribution system and fair price shops. What is necessary is for the Government to have positive checks on the misuse of these systems. This is where the housewife is unable to fight back because of there not being a

very active consumer cell, because of lack of consumer awareness, because of an artificially created state of livelihood. By that I mean media, the media that is being used by the Government like the television, like the radio which has the farthest reach to educate women in the country. Those very media people, for their economic viability, have resorted to lending out time to commercials. These commercials, in turn, have peddled a soft drink to me, a noodle to me and created an artificial awareness of what is really required for any family. I want to question the morality of permitting this in a government in India where we have said that television is a means to educate the masses, that television is an instrument to reach out to rural India. Can you believe that my counterpart who is sitting in a village is going to see an advertisement on the TV for a noodle or any other carbohydrate product which is pure carbohydrate and no protein, no other ingredient which will contribute to my nutritional limits and being aware of that product, I would rather spend my hard-earned money on this than on nutrition that is required by me! We are creating a false awareness, we are creating an illusionary fact to the people of this country.

I would request you not to view this in isolation. Price rise of essential commodities cannot be viewed in isolation, in alienation of facts that are there because they are inter-dependent. Every other Ministry, every other Department is concerned. Hence I would like to emphasise that unless the Government wakes up and adopts a coordinated common policy that is going to encourage women to educate women that we want and we have to have a proper distribution system for basic and essential commodities, women do not stand to benefit. We cannot go to a shopkeeper who tells us, you have to buy it at the price that he asks for it, otherwise you can leave it. You cannot give a licence

to him to speak to me as a wife, to me as a mother that I cannot feed my child and for lack of nutrition in my body I cannot purchase nutrition because the price has gone up, that I cannot have proper distribution system which brings food to me in peak conditions, that I cannot afford the price when it does come to that. Then it becomes a Catch 22 situation, it becomes a vicious circle and we go one step backwards in "Health for All by 2000 AD" as predicted by the Health Ministry.

Without going into all this black and white which is here, there is a vast range of grey between facts and figures, there is a vast range which is going to hurt us if we do not get down to this. Consumer awareness only gives that education, but consumer awareness is not being taken up by the Government. Why has the Government not used the media to educate the masses that they can go to this place and complain if they are not getting things at the fair price shops? Why is it so expensive to complain in this country? Why is it difficult to get justice everywhere about our 1.00 P. M. rights? Why has it become impossible for the common man to stand in the queue and ask for what is rightfully his? ..(Time bell rings).. I plead with you, Madam, you have been ringing the bell to say that the time is over, and this is significant of what is happening in the country. We do not have enough time for any of our essential commodities: we do not have enough time to ask for what is rightfully ours.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: To talk more and do less?

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: That is the Government policy, Madam—to print more and give less. If they divert half the money that they spend on publishing matter in this House, I am sure my sisters in this country would have more to eat. Thank you.

SHRI ASHIS SEN (West Bengal): Madam, thank you for calling my name, though belatedly. We in this House are very much concerned and worried because of this galloping rise in the prices of essential commodities which essentially flows from the Government's fiscal policies leading to such a serious state of affairs.

Measures that the Government have taken have made the traders and big business much more happy. That is why we call this Government not a Government for the people but for those who are money-makers. The prices of essential commodities—food, cloth, transport, edible oil, every item needed by a normal family—are going up rapidly. The consumer price index is nearing 700 points, though these index points are defective and fraudulent, as we call them, because of the instances which we have come across. There is no Government effort to check this position. On the other hand, we find that the Government is increasing the prices of commodities by an administered price policy. Right from railways to coal, steel, petrol, diesel, cement and sugar, every essential commodity needed by the consumer, the average citizen, the prices are being increased, not by the interplay of forces of demand and supply but by administrative fiat which have given rise to such rapid increase in prices. When Government goes on doing this, when the public sector is ordered or directed to increase the prices, naturally, the private sector will be very much happy—and they are very much interested in it—and so it has got an influence on the price level in the private sector also. These, in turn, result in our borrowings. Government wants to find money to pay for its debts, domestic and foreign. On foreign liabilities, interest and instalments have to be paid. That is why the Government wants to take recourse to mopping up money for these repayments by increasing the prices.

And why is the Government doing this? If it has been in the interests

of the common man, the citizen, of this country then they would have taken a different fiscal policy. But we find that there is a directive, an instruction, a guideline from the World Bank from which the Government has been borrowing every now and then. The World bank has directed that the subsidy on consumer goods like food, petrol, coal, power, transport, etc., should be reduced. That means more prices have to be paid by the people. Naturally it has got its consequential effects on every item required and consumed by the people of our country. Added to this is another factor, the factor of export of rice. When you cannot give food to people in drought-affected areas, you export rice.

I am reminded of Kalahandi in Orissa where food supplies cannot go. There is a Green Revolution, reportedly, and there is enough stock, but people do not get it. They do not have the purchasing power. An added factor is, articles like cotton yarn, tea, etc., are also being exported. Consequently, the effect on the home market is that the prices of these commodities are increasing. When there is need for production of more cheap cloth for the people, we find that encouragement is given and attention is being paid to production of more and more synthetic goods and their export, with the result that the mills which are required to produce cheaper cloth, are not producing it because they do not get sufficient return for that. That is why, there is shrinkage in the home market. That is one of the basic reasons because it is due to closure of industries, sickness, due to lack of policy for financing industries to keep them going. The result is that there is more and more unemployment. Less and less people are having their earnings. Consequently, the market is shrinking. There is no demand for goods. Normally it should have been that the prices should have gone down as a result of that, by the in-

terplay of forces of demand and supply. On the other hand, the Government is taking recourse to a position that even though the prices could come down, by their administrative fiat they are going to increase the prices, and it has its effect on the private sector?

Then, there is increase in the money supply without any rhyme or any acceptable reason because of the resort to deficit financing. At the same time there is no equitable distribution. (*Time bell rings*) A couple of minutes, Madam.

There is no equitable distribution of articles needed. We found the other day when a question came about supply of rice to Kerala, Mr. Balanandan was raising it, and he gave statistical figures to show how the supply of rice to Kerala has been curtailed. We in West Bengal are also finding that. Earlier speakers have spoken that in the recorded minutes, oil, rice, sugar, kerosene are being supplied, but there is a wide gap between the actual allotment and the real supply, with the result there is scarcity and dearth of these commodities. Consequently, the private traders are getting benefit of that by increasing the prices and selling the commodities in the so-called black market.

We find from our personal experiences that even the foodgrains that are supplied through our area fair-price shops, whether rice or wheat supplied from centre, though with the same price, are of worse quality compared to supplies in Delhi. They are not consumable. The result is that the buyers are going to the open market to buy these articles at a higher price. Naturally, the prices are also going up. This is also applicable to the question of sugar, non-levy sugar and levy sugar. You might be experiencing it yourself too.

Now, the question, therefore, arises whether, in order to get out of this morass, the Government is prepared

to find out ways and means for increasing the purchasing power of the masses of our people. How can it be done? By an economic policy by which the industries do not become sick, the employment potential is not affected, there is more purchasing power. The purchasing power in the urban and semi-urban areas and the purchasing power in the rural areas also is essentially needed because the vast populace are in those areas, the rural areas. How can that be done? One way is, the Government must take into account that for increasing the purchasing power of the people, land reforms must be taken as a task, as a perspective. Otherwise, this continuity of this cycle will go on over and over again. We have to come over here every time to discuss the matter.

Then comes the question of supply of essential commodities through the public distribution system throughout the country. Why is it not possible that such articles shall be purchasable from all the fair-price shops and that one will not be availing them in the outside market? How much? A thousand crores of rupees that will be needed for fixed-price supply throughout the country, of say, 14 essential commodities. That will have a tremendous effect of reducing the prices. The Government of my State is trying to keep the supply going, with the result the market prices of essential goods have not gone up so much. Is the Government prepared to do this as also land reform, stop blanket export of food and other essential commodities and procurement in a more effective manner all over the country? Is the Government prepared to do that? This is the way by which we may perhaps help the prices to come down.

Thank you, Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. A. G. Kulkarni. I hope you will be very brief.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI (Maharashtra): Oh, yes. I will ask questions only.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: All Calling Attentions go for four hours. I do not know how time for this important Calling Attention has been curtailed.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If you want to have more discussion on it, you can skip your lunch hour. But that does not mean that you can go on discussing it.

SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV (Maharashtra): We agree.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: I am not going to take the time of the House by quoting various indices because everybody knows these. I know that the price rise is a complex phenomenon. One side of it is supply side and another is demand side. Demand is controlled by financial and economic levers while the supply side is controlled by the Ministry of Supply. If you go through the Statement of the Minister given here you will find that it is a tight-rope walking. Price rise has become very oppressive whether it is in Delhi or in Bombay or anywhere. It is all the more oppressive in rural areas where 80 per cent of the population lives. Various figures have been given in this regard. Here I am not concerned with the whole-sale price index, which the Government takes as a standard. I am more concerned with the consumer price index. What I find here is that the consumer price index has moved in a very different manner from what this statement indicates. The consumer price index—I am quoting particularly for the industrial workers—in April 1987-88, when the Budget was presented, was 691. It has now reached 752. That means there is a staggering double-digit increase. The consumer price index is oppressive, as my colleague, Mrs. Choudhury, has also mentioned. It

has become a problem for the Housewife to live with dignity, particularly when the value of the Rupee has come down to 13 naye paise. Now she cannot purchase the materials required to keep the house together and to feed the children.

Another aspect of the price rise is the public distribution system. Very recently a reply was given on it pointing out various facets of the public distribution system. But here I may point out that particularly in the rural areas, the public distribution system is mostly corrupt. Those who live in the rural areas or even in Bombay, Pune, Delhi or anywhere for them this system has become totally corrupt. The Government at the Centre, the State Governments and the Corporation say that they have got a monitoring system, but what I find is that the unscrupulous traders and unscrupulous licence holders are misusing the materials supplied to them by the Government thereby perpetuating and accelerating the price rise. The public distribution system which is a vital aspect of the entire supply side economy is at present under great strain. Even with all the emphasis which the hon. Minister has stated, he had very little to do with the implementation of the public distribution system. It is the State Government which is responsible. The State Government with limited resources and limited monitoring assistance, cannot enforce the public distribution system. Madam, you also come from the rural area and many of my friends here also come from rural area and they know what is happening in the public distribution system. If 10 bags of sugar are released from the Collectorate Office for X, Y or Z, they will never go to the village at all. The village licence-holder always keeps in his cupboard all the ration cards of the population. He will debit so much of kilograms, so much of kilograms of sugar or rice or wheat and the entire material is concealed and sold at the district level at exorbitant prices. This is

the position with regard to sugar, wheat and rice. This is actually a fact. Madam, I am aware that the Minister cannot do anything. I am not blaming you at all. It is the monitoring system which had to be strengthened. The main weakness of the public distribution system is lack of monitoring at this level.

Madam, when the budget was presented, Tiwariji and his Secretary in the Ministry said that there will be no price rise, nothing will happen. But there was unprecedented increase during the whole of the last year. The price have increased by 13 per cent. This I got from the "Review of Price-rise" from our Parliament Library. Madam, I want to say that the budget's scope and the Secretary's statement have no relevance as far as price-rise is concerned.

Then, Madam, I come to another aspect which Mr. Chitta Basu was elaborating and other friends also, that is, economic side of the price-rise is the money supply. Now, the rupee value is 13 naye paise. What Mr. Sukh Ram or Mr. Kulkarni can do? The real rupee value has gone down to such a low level, it cannot purchase anything. The price rise is one of the aspects for the rupee value going down. We have got terrible deficit financing. As it has been rightly claimed in the Statement by the Minister, during the last three droughts, Government has balanced both the things. I am proud of it. I don't blame the Government because Government has managed three droughts. These droughts have created unprecedented problems. Whether it is balanced or not balanced, people have to suffer. So I draw your attention that this system has to be looked into.

The last point that I want to place before you is one of the difficulties faced by the Maharashtra State from which I come. As you know, the supply position has been drastically reduced whether it is wheat or rice. Rice quota has been reduced from 70,000 tonnes to 60,000 tonnes. Wheat

quota has been reduced from 1,80,000. So such reduction is going on.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: Wheat quota has been reduced from 1,80,000 to 65,000 tonnes.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Yes, that is what I am saying. From 1,80,000 tonnes it has come down to 65,000 tonnes.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Is it for Maharashtra only?

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Yes, So, Madam Deputy Chairman, I plead with the Minister of Food and Civil Supplies that Maharashtra is staggering, is really suffering because of the short supply and one of the offshoots of this short supply is that it is not affecting the rich people who can afford any price but the short supply is affecting the people working on employment guarantee scheme, those workers who are breaking stones for getting some livelihood, they are suffering. So, I would request you and beg of you because I do not want to quote anything. There are many other Members from the State who are going to speak. These are the genuine difficulties. You may have your own side. I do not say that you do not have your side but supplies to Maharashtra have to be upgraded. Otherwise, the new atmosphere, the new environment, created in the State will suffer to a large extent.

The last point which I want to make is that the money supply, the deficit financing are not in your hands but you have to look into them and particularly as I mentioned, the monitoring of public distribution system has to be intensified where this corruption is defrauding a poor man. It is not defrauding a rich man. There are many rich persons in the cities and they can spend any amount of money. Madam, for the information of Mr. Sukh Ram, I would like to tell him. This is an answer given by him on 13-5-88 on the Delhi price rise. I

[Shri A. G. Kulkarni]

am really surprised how a Delhi housewife can meet her needs with so much rise in prices. The retail prices in Delhi have risen from 4.50 per cent to 4.75 per cent as on 25-3-88, that is plus 5.6 per cent. Arhar, there is plus 33 per cent price rise within a period of one year. Then in case of Moong, it is 65 per cent. Then groundnut oil, the increase is 15 per cent. Mustard oil, the increase is 15 per cent and how do we expect a Delhi housewife with the rupee falling and the rupee value going down to make her both ends meet? Delhi is a premium city of the country. I was told, the population of Delhi is 82 lakhs. There are many poor and slum areas in Delhi. So also in Madras, Bombay and Calcutta. (*Time bell rings*). So, you have to look into the all these matters. Thank you.

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI (Karnataka): Madam Deputy Chairman, I must compliment the hon. Minister for at least two things. First, he shares the concern of the Opposition Members about the price rise and second, fortunately, his statement is free from any partisan ends, rancour or political polemics. But having paid these two compliments to him, I must join issue with him on almost everything else that the statement contains.

First of all, Madam Deputy Chairman, it is neither helpful nor honest to confine your figures to the 17 weeks ending 23rd of July. The common man is groaning under the burden of inflation (a) which is a decade old and (b) which at least has seen galloping proportions in the last year which ended on 31st of March, 1988 and even if the hon. Minister was right that during the last 17 weeks, there has been some slowing down of the inflation rate, it is not helpful and it does not bring any succour or relief to the common man, who is groaning under the weight of this tremendous inflation. Madam, it is good to recall a PTI report of June 28 which says that all the four metropolises, that is Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and Madras, have not only posted a double

digit inflation during the twelve months ended April 1988, but also registered a higher rate than the all-India average of 10.4 per cent for the period. Here is a UNI report of July 31 which says that the official wholesale price index for all commodities—base 1970-71—marginally rose to a new high of 432.6 points during the week ending July 16. I think the hon. Minister treats us like the old grandmother treating the ununderstanding babe in the arms with some sweet lullabies. That is what he has tried to do by telling us that things are good for the last 17 weeks.

Madam, I said that I quarrel with everything else in the statement. I quarrel with the diagnosis. The diagnosis of the problem is wrong. Though in paragraph 4 of the statement the hon. Minister states that they have taken various measures, by the Central and the State Governments, relating to increase in production and availability and expansion and improvement of the public distribution system, the common man has not seen the benefits of such expansion or improvement of the public distribution system. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. The common man's misery is growing more and more acute every day. To that, every Member of this House will be a witness and every housewife outside this House will be a witness to the complete absence of any veracity in this kind of claims which are being made. (*Interruptions*).

Well, Madam, I must say that first of all, the diagnosis is wrong. The diagnosis is wrong because our economic policies both at the Central level and at the State level proceed upon a basic misconception. The basic misconception is that you do not invest enough in agriculture. Ultimately, it is land and agriculture which alone will produce a surplus value, which alone, by the bounty of nature, can give you ten times what you invest. Invest a rupee in land and agriculture and you will get back ten

rupees, if not more. And, unfortunately, today the position of the kisan all over the country is not good. I speak by the kisan at least in Maharashtra. Today the kisan in Maharashtra is in insolvent circumstances. The kisan has been compelled to invoke the provisions of the Provincial Insolvency Act. Already 250,000 applications for declaration of insolvency have been made in various courts in Maharashtra and this figure is soon going to rise to about a million applications by the agriculturists. If the kisan today is in a position in which he cannot pay his debts, in which he has to knock at the doors of our courts for the purpose of declaring himself as an insolvent and asking for relief from indebtedness which the callous Governments are not prepared to give him, then, you please understand that you are never going to solve the problem of inflation and rising prices. Agriculture and land are the sources of elementary housing, elementary clothing, elementary eating and of everything which is a basic necessity of a human being. Ultimately, they come from land and agriculture. I ask you to revise your policies.

Now, you have got a body called the Agricultural Prices Commission. That Commission has nothing to do with agriculture. It understands neither agriculture nor the needs of agriculturists. I can give you some howlers in the operation of this Commission. For example, it has provided, in the process of fixing the prices of agricultural products, six paise, six paise per hectare, as the cost of insecticide and pesticide. I do not know how they did it. If those gentlemen were before me, I could ask them a few questions in front of me and they would just look plainly ridiculous. But, Madam, this is the truth. Six paise per hectare is the calculated price by this Agricultural Prices Commission. Rs. 3 per cart-load of manure. What is taken into account by the Agricultural Prices Commission? Rs. 3.7 is the wage. Even in Maharashtra the minimum wage you

are giving is Rs. 7. Instead of Rs. 7 a day, they take into account 3.7. If you have this kind of an Agricultural Prices Commission, how is the kisan going to improve, how is the kisan going to improve agriculture and how is agricultural production going to bring down prices which are galloping at a fierce, monstrous, rate?...

SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV:*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, please don't interrupt. I am not permitting you.

SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV:*

SHRI ASHIS SEN: Madam, this has never been the practice in the past that interruptions should be allowed in the Calling-Attention. He cannot interrupt in the Calling-Attention.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, I have not permitted him. It is not going on record.

Mr. Jethmalani, you please continue.

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: I do not resent this interruption. It is a welcome interruption. I am glad to tell the honourable Member from Maharashtra that I am also in touch with his Chief Minister and be sure that what the Member says is impossible for any Government to do, perhaps his Government will do because elections are coming and I am sure the principal things will now be done on the eve of election.

From the statement of the honourable Minister I can see that he almost justifies the conclusions of a very reputed economist, Mr. Swaminathan, who published them recently in an article and this is what he has to say about inflation:

"This inflation takes care of both elements: debt trap and rising debt

*Not recorded.

[Shri Ram Jethamalani]

and rising interest rates. It is the ultimate tax that balances the Government's books. It is no longer an aberration, to be remedied. It is now an essential form of taxation that cannot be disturbed. If the rate of inflation is suddenly cut, it will greatly increase the real rate of interest on Government debt as well as the outstanding value of this debt. That will bankrupt the Government speedily. So no Government in future will dare tackle inflation. If it tries to do so, it will come a cropper so quickly that it will be forced to return to Hindu rule."

I think the honourable Minister is, consciously or unconsciously, justifying this criticism because if this is what the Government believes the kind of policy it has enunciated in the statement which the Minister has made today, then one is convinced that the Government has a vested interest in continuing the inflation because that is the only phenomenon today which helps them to balance their books; otherwise, the Government is really bankrupt by reason of their economic policy.

I will not take much time of the House now. I want only to draw attention to two more vital things. For this you don't have to go to London School of Economics to pick up your economics; you don't have to go to a university to acquire any degree in economics. Ultimately the volume of corruption must always find its reflection in the prices of commodities. Whatever be the huge, colossal, figures running into crores and crores that you find today in all these scandals and I am not going into the question of who is responsible and who the real culprit is, that is an issue which is irrelevant, the fact remains that crores and crores of the common man's money is being stolen and ultimately that must be reflected in the prices of commodities. Therefore, so long as you do not speedily deal with the problem of corruption, you are

not going to bring down the prices. The more corruption grows, the more the prices grow. These two are an inextricably mixed up phenomenon and you cannot possibly divorce one from the other. Therefore, I am unable to understand what the Minister means when he says in his statement, "I have taken stringent measures of enforcement and intensified the monitoring at various levels." Madam, ... (Time bell rings)... Only one point more which will take just five seconds only.

Madam, the last thing that I have to say is that the Government, the spokesmen of the Government, many honourable politicians and many honourable Ministers are pouring salt over the wounds, over the raw wounds, of the common man when the common man today finds his life so miserable. The common man today finds perhaps death preferable to life because he is living in such conditions in the slums of Bombay and outside Bombay and elsewhere that even a beast will revolt. He sees conspicuous consumption by people who have made themselves rich and he sets the vulgar and ostentatious display of life-style by many people. Therefore, what does the common man feel when he sees that others are living in that kind of opulent luxury and he is val-loring in the quagmire of poverty, filth, dirt and disease? This ostentatious display this vulgar display of ill-gotten wealth, must be put a stop to. If you are not able to cure the wounds, at least do not cause anguish and pain and acute suffering which must necessarily come when somebody compares his sorrow with that of his neighbour. Thank you, Madam

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Jagesh Desai.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: Madam, I am thankful to the Chairman for having admitted this important Call Attention Motion.

Madam, first of all I will take up from where the previous speaker, the

honourable Member Shri Ram Jethmalani, left. He said that this Government has got vested interests in seeing that the inflation rises. I stoutly deny this. It was the Janata Government which had a vested interest. In 1979-80, the inflation rate, Mr. Jethmalani, was 21.4 per cent and this year... (Interruptions)... I do not want to defend the present and I will come to that later. To say that the Government has got a vested interest means that he lacks the knowledge and information. You have to see what the position was in 1979-80 in all respects of the economy... (Interruptions)... Please listen to me first.

I do not want this Government also to compare the seventeen weeks of last year with these seventeen weeks. Yes, the rate of inflation may be less. But the prices have gone up as compared to the previous seventeen weeks. We should not forget this and we have to take a decision to see that we are able to arrest this price rise.

Madam, I am very unhappy that in spite of taking several measures the prices are not coming down. Every day the price goes up. Even the price of sugar which was at a particular level yesterday has gone up by five rupees today! Yes, to some extent, the prices of edible oils are under check. But what about the prices of pulses like arhar, moong, jowar, etc. and foodgrains like wheat and rice? Arhar prices are going up. As compared to last year, the price of arhar has gone up by 32.5 per cent in 1987-88 whereas in 1986-87 it had gone down by 11 per cent. But it is going up now. What are we going to do about this phenomenon? Festival season is coming now: Janmashtami will be there; Onam will be there; Pooja will be there; Ganesh Utsav will be there; Navaratri will be there; and Diwali will be there. What are you going to do to see that the people get their daily necessities of life at reasonable prices? What action are

you taking? Madam, I had raised a Special Mention on this very same issue. As far as Maharashtra is concerned—this may not be with regard to Maharashtra alone and it may be so throughout the country—the wheat quota which was one lakh tonnes has been brought down to 65,000 tonnes. And yet you want to say that the people are getting wheat and rice from the ration shops? Nobody is going to accept this. When in the market the availability is less, at that time the Government must give more goods in the public distribution system. Instead of pumping in, it has reduced. To what extent? Thirty-five per cent. Madam, I have very authentic information from Bombay that in the month of July the quota of wheat, rice and palm-oil given was only 25 per cent. Are you going to give in the month of August 75 per cent balance plus 100 per cent? People feel very hard hit. That is why the Government must come out with an action plan.

Madam, as regards the public distribution system I am happy that there are more shops now. I am happy that for rural areas you have more mobile vans; I am very much happy about it. And I compliment the Government for this. But stocks are not available. Then what is the use of that? You have to have a system whereby you have more stocks. We have to see that these essential commodities are available in the fair price shops. If they are not available and the people go to fair price shops and come back without them, the image of the Government is tarnished. It may be the State Government or the Central Government. We have to see that this type of happening is avoided.

Many of the essential commodities are given in black market. Mr. Kulkarni has very rightly said that it is not your responsibility; it is the State Government's responsibility. But I

[Shri Jagesh Desai]

will give an example. In the year 1975 or 1976 in Bombay itself there were 20 lakhs units which were bogus and this means that 10 lakh people who were not there were holding ration cards. Out of 60 lakhs of population, 10 lakh! It means that one-sixth of all your commodities were going in black market. That is why the Central Government must take action against the State Government that they have to see that all these bogus cards are taken out, so that the common man can get commodities, otherwise they will go into black market and prices will go up.

What is the value of the rupee now? As compared to what it was in 1960? As on 1st January, 1988 the value of the rupee was 13.55 paise. And during six months if the inflation has gone up by 10 per cent, then, according to me, the present value of the rupee is 12.25 paise. How can the poor people afford to buy if this is the inflation? That is why I wish the Government comes out with such schemes which will help the poor people. Rich people do not buy from fair price shops; they never buy. I was also Minister in charge of this department and I know this. It is the industrial worker, it is the common man, it is the poor man who are buying from these shops. And if they do not get, what is the sense in it? And what are the items you have to give? The festival season is coming. Take palm oil. We have to import palm oil. Rich people will take what is called refined groundnut oil or some other oil. The common man wants his edible oil which may be groundnut oil or rapeseed oil. And that can only be available at a very fair price from the fair price shops. And that you have to do.

Prices have gone up. Mr. Kulkarni has mentioned about this 'Moong' price as on 26-9-87 and on 9-7-88, within the period of less than one year, has gone up by 72.4%. Similar is the case with arhar dal. It has gone up by 33.3 per cent. Rice has gone up by 9 per cent. Wheat

has gone up by 6 per cent. Fish has gone up by 30.5 per cent. There are no items of which the prices have not gone up. I am happy that recently the trend is that the prices are going down. There is no doubt about it. But still we have to manage for six months. That is why, I would request the Government to come out with an Action Plan. They should take the House into confidence. They should take our suggestions as to how we can improve this situation.

Secondly, if I am correct, the stock of wheat on 1st of April, 1988, was 3.34 million tonnes. The stock of rice was 5.91 million tonnes. The total stock was 9.25 million tonnes. The normal requirement of stock is from 17 million to 21 million tonnes. I would like to know from the Government what they are going to do to see that this stock of foodgrains is maintained and made available. As far as Maharashtra is concerned, I have given the example of Bombay. In Maharashtra the quota is reduced. You have to restore the whole quota because the situation is very bad. You have to do something to see that the situation is improved.

I come to my last point. I know that it is very difficult. But we have to make efforts. When the purchasing power is going down to such a large extent, at least we should supply essential commodities to the poorest of the poor and at least those who are working under the Employment Guarantee Scheme and other poor people should be supplied pulses so that they can have roti with dal. If this is done, then I think the discussion we are having in this House will have some fruitful purpose. If no action is taken after the discussion, it means that nothing is done. Therefore, the Government should take up the action plan as to how we can improve the situation in the coming season. I am happy that the Minister has come out with some action that he is taking. I wish that they take more vigorous action to see that the prices are arrested. Thank you.

श्री कैलाश पति मिश्र (बिहार) : महोदया, मंत्री महोदय ने जो स्टेटमेंट सदन में दिया है उस स्टेटमेंट में विश्वास के साथ कुछ आधार प्रकट किया है, मैं उनके वक्तव्य के उस अंश को उद्धृत करना चाहता हूँ—

"We have had widespread rains so far all over the country. This has improved the prospects of kharif crops very substantially."

आश्चर्य लगता है कि सरकार की नीतियों का आधार प्राकृतिक साधन बन गया है। वर्षा हो गई तो सरकार सफल हो गई, सुखाड़ हो गया तो सरकार के प्राण निकलने लगे। मैं अन्य बातों को दोहराना नहीं चाहता हूँ, लेकिन इस स्टेटमेंट के अन्दर दिया हुआ है कि 3.47 लाख फेयर प्राइस शोप्स यानी दुकानें खोली गई, 231 मोबाइल वेन्स घूम रही हैं और 78423 रेड्स हुई हैं।

[उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री जगेश देसाई)
पीठासीन हुए]

इसमें कहीं भी उल्लेख नहीं है कि देश की पूरी आबादी का कितना बड़ा हिस्सा सरकार के द्वारा इन फेयर प्राइस शोप्स के अन्तर्गत अपनाया गया है। 231 मोबाइल वेन्स हैं और रेड्स के ऊपर रेड्स होते हुए भी और सब कुछ प्रयत्न करने के बाद भी कितनी आबादी के लिए इन फेयर प्राइस शोप्स को उपलब्ध कराया गया है। मैं समझता हूँ कि अगर उपभोक्ताओं के साथ ईमानदारी बरतनी हो तो सरकार के पास एक रिकार्ड ऐसा होना चाहिए जिससे पता चल सके कि उपभोक्ताओं को फेयर प्राइस शोप्स की दुकानों से क्या लाभ मिला है। महोदय, मैं एक चीज का उल्लेख करना चाहता हूँ। हम एक ऐसे चक्कर में घूम रहे हैं और शायद लगातार घूमते रह जायेंगे जब तक दो-तीन बातों पर हम काबू न पा सकें। मैं आग्रह करना चाहता हूँ कि सरकार इसके ऊपर विचार करे। कारखानों से उत्पादित होने वाली

वस्तुओं का लागत मूल्य कितना है यह एक एक वस्तु के ऊपर लिखा हुआ रहना चाहिये, वह तय होना चाहिये। जितने भी मैनफैक्चर्ड गुड्स हैं, आज उनका कोई हिसाब नहीं है। जिस एक कीमत के ऊपर वह चीज बाजार में बिक रही है वह कीमत ठीक है या अधाधुंध आसमान में उनकी कीमतें बढ़ा दी हैं इसको देखने के लिये क्या सरकार के पास कोई मशीनरी है? सरकार के पास इसका क्या जवाब है? मैं एक उदाहरण के साथ कहना चाहता हूँ कि बजाज स्कूटर, मैं दावे के साथ कहता हूँ कि उसका सारा खर्च लिबरली जोड़ लेने के बाद एक स्कूटर के ऊपर सात हजार रुपये से अधिक का खर्चा आ ही नहीं सकता। अब अगर 7 हजार रुपये एक बजाज स्कूटर के ऊपर लागत आती है तो यह सरकार को तय करना पड़ेगा कि उसकी कीमत बाजार में आने के बाद क्या होनी चाहिये। हम जानते हैं कि आज बाजार में बजाज स्कूटर किस कीमत पर बिक रहा है। वह 12 हजार रुपये के लगभग बिक रहा है। 7 हजार रुपये उसकी लागत हो और उपभोक्ताओं को 12 हजार की कीमत से नीचे वह प्राप्त न हो तो हमारी यह कैसी व्यवस्था है, कैसा हमारा नियमन है, कितना आर्थिक हमारा नियंत्रण है, इस पर सरकार को विचार करना चाहिये। अगर सचमुच मैं आप इस प्रश्न का हल निकालना चाहते हैं, उचित जवाब चाहते हैं तो मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि सरकार एक ऐसी नीति तय करे कि चाहे पब्लिक सेक्टर हो और चाहे प्राइवेट सेक्टर हो, तमाम कारखानों से जितनी भी वस्तुओं का उत्पादन होता है, उनकी लागत कितनी है और उनका मूल्य कितना है यह घोषित होना चाहिये। इसी प्रकार से जब खेती की बात आती है, कृषि पर बात आती है तो खेतों से उत्पादित हर चीज का आप कितना मूल्य तय करते हैं इसका भी जिक्र होना चाहिये। खेती से उत्पादित होने वाली हर एक वस्तु की लागत खर्च कितना बैठता है इसका भी जिक्र होना चाहिये, यह भी घोषित होना चाहिये। दुर्भाग्य है कि हम दोनों तरफ

[श्री कैलाश पति मिश्र]

से भाग रहे हैं, दोनों बिन्दुओं से भाग रहे हैं। किसी को भी समेटने को तैयार नहीं हैं। कारखानों से उत्पादित वस्तुओं के लागत मूल्य के आधार पर हमने कोई ऐसी नीति नहीं बनाई है जिसके अनुसार हर वस्तु की कीमत घोषित हो, उसके ऊपर साफ लिखा हो कि इसका लागत मूल्य इतना है ताकि यह पता लग सके कि उस तुक्का पर कितना नफा है। खेती में उत्पादित होने वाली किसी भी वस्तु के उत्पादन पर कितनी लागत बैठती है, कितना खर्चा बँटा, अगर इसका निर्धारण नहीं होगा, इसकी घोषणा नहीं होगी तो देश के किसानों के साथ कदापि कभी भी न्याय नहीं होगा। आखिर देश का आर्थिक संचालन किन बातों पर चल रहा है। (समय की घंटी)... थोड़ी देर बोलने दीजिये। मैं लम्बा भाषण नहीं करूँगा।

उपसध्यक्ष (श्री जगेश बेन्साई) : ठीक है।

श्री कैलाशपति मिश्र : खेती में ऊपर उभर रहा है, उसके साथ मजदूर है। कारखानों में काम करने वाले कर्मचारी हैं, श्रमिक हैं और कारखानों के सिर पर बैठा हुआ मालिक जो है वह उद्योगपति है और सारा समाज उपभोक्ता है जब तक अलग अलग इन तीनों श्रेणियों की हानि पर विचार नहीं किया जायेगा तब तक न आप इन्टेलिजेंस रोक सकते हैं, न मद्रासिफिकी को रोक सकते हैं, न मंहगाई को रोक सकते हैं, न अप्रत्याचार को रोक सकते हैं, न करप्शन रोक सकते हैं। यह आप यदि रखिये। मैं इधर उधर की बातों पर न जाते हुए जो बातें बची गई हैं उनको दोहराना नहीं चाहता। मैं आपसे एक मांग कर रहा हूँ।

क्या, भारत सरकार यह नीति तय करने के लिए तैयार है कि कारखानों में उत्पादित होने वाली हर एक चीज पर उसकी कीमत लिखी रहेगी और उसकी घोषणा सरकार के द्वारा तथा उद्योगपतियों के द्वारा होती रहेगी ताकि यह पता चल सके कि किस चीज पर

कितने प्रतिशत मुनाफा प्राप्त किया जा रहा है। खेत में पैदा होने वाली हर चीज का लागत व्यय कितना है, लाभत खर्च कितना है इसकी भी घोषणा होनी चाहिये। अंत में मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि आप जब किसानों की रक्षा के लिए सपोर्ट प्राइस की घोषणा करते हैं संरक्षण मूल्य या प्राक्वोरमेंट प्राइस आप घोषित करते हैं कभी इस बात का हिसाब आप नहीं लगाते हैं कि उत्पादन कितना हुआ और आपकी परचेसिंग शक्ति त्रय शक्ति कितनी है। देश भर के अन्दर आप ने कितने परचेसिंग सेंटर्स खड़े किये हैं। आज किसान मर रहा है किसान जिन्दा है या नहीं है उसको उचित मूल्य मिल रहा है या नहीं मिल रहा है उसका कोई हिस्सा किताब आपके पास नहीं है। मुझे इस बात का दुःख है कि इनफ्लेशन को आप रोक नहीं सकते हैं बेकार उसके लिए दम भर रहे हैं। जहाँ तक हमारी आर्थिक आत्म निर्भरता का सवाल है हमारे ऊपर विदेशी वार्ज और उस पर सूद का बोझ है न हम विदेशी वार्ज घटा सकते हैं और न ब्याज घटा सकते हैं और न इनफ्लेशन को रोक सकते हैं और न आर्थिक मामलों में आत्म निर्भर बन सकते हैं। उससे हम बहुत दूर चले गये हैं और उसी का दुष्परिणाम यह हो रहा है कि सिर से पैर तक बदम बदम पर अप्रत्याचार है। जहाँ अंगुली रखी जाए वहाँ पर अप्रत्याचार है आप हिम्मत के साथ इतनी भी घोषणा नहीं कर सकते। इसलिए मैं आग्रह करना चाहता हूँ कि कुछ ठोस कदम उठाएँ, ठोस नीतियाँ बनाएँ ठोस योजनाएँ बनाएँ, रीजनिंग के साथ जिसको कहा जा सके उसके अंदर रीजनिंग दिखायी देता है ऐसी रीजनिंग से जोड़ने वाली हर बात से आप भाग रहे हैं। मेरा आग्रह है कि पहले आप अपनी नीतियों को ठीक करिये। धन्यवाद।

श्री राम अद्वेश सिंह (बिहार) : मायबर, मुझे दुःखी है कि सरकार ने ध्यानाकर्षण प्रस्ताव को रबीकार कर के देश की सब से जलती हुई समस्या पर विचार करने के लिए सहमति दी है।

कीमतों के बढ़ने के असर का कारण क्या है इस संबंध में हम को गहराई में जाना होगा। मैं पहले वही गई बातों को और आंकड़ों को दोहराना नहीं चाहूंगा लेकिन मैं आपका ध्यान मौलिक कारणों की ओर खींचना चाहता हूँ जिनसे कीमतें बढ़ रही हैं और सामान घट रहा है, सामान का उत्पादन कम हो रहा है। इस समस्या पर बहुत गहराई से ढंग से चिन्तन इस देश के महान मनीषि डा० राम मनोहर लोहिया ने किया था। उन्होंने कहा था कि दाम बान्धने की व्यवस्था जब तक नहीं होगा जनता की क्रय शक्ति नहीं बढ़ सकती है। जब तक जनता की क्रय शक्ति नहीं बढ़ेगी तब तक मांग नहीं बढ़ेगी और मांग बढ़ने से फिर उत्पादन बढ़ेगा और उत्पादन बढ़ने से फिर रोजगार के अवसर बढ़ेंगे और रोजगार के अवसर बढ़ने से क्रय शक्ति बढ़ेगी। इसलिए क्रय शक्ति बढ़ने के लिए उपाय होने चाहिये। अर्थ-शास्त्रियों ने इस बारे में बहुत विचार किया है लेकिन अलग अलग ढंग से विचार किया है, इसके मौलिक कारणों पर चिन्तन नहीं किया है। मौलिक कारण डा० लोहिया ने बताया कि दाम बांधो। दाम के सिद्धांत तय करो तथा लागत खर्च से कारखानियां माल का दाम डेढ़ गुने से ज्यादा किसी हालत में नहीं होगा। अगर पेंसिलेन की एक सुई का लागत खर्च 20 पैसे आता है तो 30 पैसे से अधिक में किसी हालत में, एक्साइज ड्यूटी, ट्रांसपोर्टेशन आदि लग कर भी नहीं बिकेगी। अगर यह बात तय हो जाती है तो सारे बाजार में दाम तय रहेगा और इस बात को मीडिया से प्रचरित करें कि इस चीज की कीमत इतनी हुई है कि घर घर के लोग सज्ज हो जायें कि चीनी का इतना लागत खर्च है। सब खुला कर दें। दोगली नीति चलायेंगे कि कुछ चीनी कंट्रोल में बिकेगी कुछ खुले बाजार में बिकेगी तो निश्चित तौर पर चीनी का दाम बढ़ेगा, कोई रोक नहीं सकता है क्योंकि ब्लैक मार्केट में चीनी चली जायेगी।

उपस राध्यक्ष (श्री जगेश बेसाई) : आप चाहते हैं कि दोहरी न हो।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : नहीं सीधी हो। मैं यह कहता हूँ कि जिस चीज को कंट्रोल में ले जायेंगे निश्चित करेंगे तो उसमें एक छिपाने की और दाम बढ़ने की साइकल जी पैदा होती है। आप केवल दाम बांध दीजिए उसके लागत खर्च के आधार पर और बता दीजिए कि उसका लागत खर्च इतना है और किसी दुकान में इतने से ज्यादा इसको नहीं बिकता चाहिए। अगर कोई चेता है तो आप ऐसा मर्चंदरी ठीक करें कि वह आम आदमी को उपलब्ध हो और आसानी से उसके पास तुरंत बायस्केट पहुंचाये। उस पर जनता भी प्रदर्शन कर सके, अपने रोष का इज्जत कर सके। यह जब तक नहीं होगा तब तक, मान्यवर, किसी हालत में कीमतों को रोक नहीं जा सकेगा। मैं एक उदाहरण देना चाहता हूँ कि दाम बांधने से क्रय शक्ति कैसे बढ़ जायेगी सारे देश की सारी जनता की...

उपस राध्यक्ष (श्री जगेश बेसाई) : यह तो बड़े महत्वका प्रश्न है मगर समय बहुत कम है। आपके पास पांच मिनट का समय है इसमें आप खत्म नहीं कर सकेंगे। आप उसके बारे में बतायें जिसके बारे में गवर्नमेंट कुछ एक्शन ले सके।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : आप तो कीड़ा मारने की बात कर रहे हैं और मैं कूड़ा बरबाद हटाने के बारे में कह रहा हूँ कि जब तक कूड़ा बरबाद नहीं हटेगा तो कीड़ा मारे फिर कीड़ा पैदा हो जायेगा, फिर मारे फिर पैदा हो जायेगा। इसलिए कूड़ा हट दिये जो उसका मूल कारण है। इसलिए सरकार औद्योगिक उत्पादन की चीजों और खेतिहर सामानों के मूल्य बांधने की नीति बनाये। डा० लोहिया ने कहा था खेती के सामान भी कीमत दो फसलों के बीच में 20 फीसदी से ज्यादा नहीं बढ़नी चाहिए। उत्तर बढ़ाव नहीं होना चाहिए और कारखानियां सामान की कीमत लागत खर्च से डेढ़ गुने से अधिक नहीं होनी चाहिए जिसमें ड्यूटी और ट्रांसपोर्टेशन शामिल है... (यवधान) मैं बताता हूँ कैसे क्रय शक्ति बढ़ेगी। फर्ज करिये आज एक धोती की लागत

[श्री राम अवधेश सिंह]

10 रुपये है और वह बाजार में 30 रुपये में मिलती है। हमारी जो क्रय शक्ति है उसमें आज एक धोती से ज्यादा हम नहीं खरीद सकते हैं। जब लागत खर्च के डेढ़ गुने पर अर्थात् 10 का डेढ़ा 15 पर वह धोती मिलेगी तो 30 रुपये में हम दो धोती खरीदेंगे। दो धोती खरीदने का मतलब मांग दुगुनी होगी। जब मांग दुगुनी होगी तो उत्पादन दुगुना होगा और इम्प्लायमेंट भी दुगुना होगा और इम्प्लायमेंट दुगुना होने से फिर पैसे उसके पास आयेंगे और फिर पैसे लौटकर जनता के पास आयेंगे। क्रय शक्ति बढ़ेगी। जब त्रय शक्ति बढ़ जायेगी तो एक चेन शुरू हो जायेगी। महोदय, मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि क्रय शक्ति पर पूरी गम्भीरता से सरकार को सोचना चाहिए। ऊपर से कीड़ा मारने वाला काम नहीं करना है।

प्राइस राइज के कुछ कारण हैं उनकी ओर मैं आपका ध्यान खींचना चाहता हूँ।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री जगेश देसाई) : आपके तीन मिनट बाकी हैं, तीन मिनट में बता दीजिए।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : महोदय, कोयला, इस्पात और अनाज की प्रोडक्ट्स हैं। ये की-प्रोडक्ट्स हैं। इनकी कीमत बढ़ेगी तो अपने आप सारी चीजों की कीमत बढ़ जाती है। कोयले से बिजली पैदा होती है और कोयले का दाम कौन तय करता है? व्यापारी नहीं, बल्कि सरकार तय करती है। इस्पात का दाम कौन तय करता है? व्यापारी नहीं बल्कि सरकार तय करती है। हर साल इन की-प्रोडक्ट्स के दाम सरकार बढ़ाती जाती है इसलिए कि ये पब्लिक सेक्टर में हैं। पब्लिक सेक्टर का खर्चा बढ़ाकर और उसमें लूट की छूट देकर ये दाम बढ़ जाते हैं। महोदय, मुठ्ठीभर नौकरशाहों की लूट का नतीजा यह होता है कि घाटा होता है और उस घाटे की अर्थ-व्यवस्था के लिए हमको डेफिसिट

फाइनांसिंग करनी पड़ती है। हमको घाटे की अर्थ व्यवस्था चलानी पड़ती है। आप जानते हैं महोदय, पूरे बजट का साढ़े दस फीसदी इस साल डेफिसिट फाइनांसिंग हुआ। मैं आपके माध्यम से सरकार से पूछना चाहता हूँ कि दुनिया में कोई माई का लाल ऐसा है कि जिस देश में बजट में साढ़े दस फीसदी डेफिसिट फाइनांसिंग हो उसमें कीमत को बढ़ने से कोई रोक सकता है? वैसे इसके लिए आप कोई तर्क दे सकते हैं, मैं जानता हूँ कि आप कहेंगे कि अगर विकास का काम हो, निर्माण का काम हो तो हो सकता है, लेकिन विकास और निर्माण का काम क्या कर रहे हैं? आपके यहां 50 हजार औद्योगिक यूनिट सिक हैं। निर्माण का क्या काम करेंगे? पुराने कारखानों को आप चला नहीं पाते हैं।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री जगेश देसाई) : अब आप आधे मिनट में खत्म कीजिए।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : अंत में मैं एक सूचना देकर खत्म करता हूँ और यह वधाई देना चाहता हूँ कल जो सदन में हंगामा हुआ तो कर्नाटक के मुख्य मंत्री ने इस्तीफा दे दिया। उसने यह बड़ा काम ऐसा किया कि जिससे पता चलता है कि जम्मूरियत में पब्लिकमैन का इमेज क्या होना चाहिए कि कोई डंगली भी उठाए तो यह उसी की जिम्मेदारी है। टेलीफोन टैपिंग की जिम्मेदारी हमारी है, इसलिए हम इस्तीफा देते हैं। उन्होंने यह महान काम किया है। लेकिन साथ-साथ यह भी कहना चाहूंगा कि जब दिल्ली में एम०पी० के, बहुगुणा के, वी०पी० सिंह के टेलीफोन टैप होत हैं तो इसके लिए प्रधान मंत्री भी इस्तीफा दें, मैं मांग करता हूँ कि इसके लिए उनकी भी जिम्मेदारी है।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): This is irrelevant. I will not allow this.

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : यह इर-रेलेवंट कैसे है।... (अवधान)

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री जगेश देसाई) : आप समाप्त कीजिए।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, मेरी बात तो सुन कीजिए, प्रार्थना है ।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): This will not go on record. This is a discussion on price rise. You are talking about something else.

SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH:*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): These are irrelevant remarks. Please sit down. I will not allow you. Prof. Bhattacharjee.

SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH:*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): Please sit down.

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : मैं बैठ जाता हूँ लेकिन आप यह बलिंग वापस लीजिए । इसमें क्या आपत्तिजनक है ?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): No. This is irrelevant. I cannot allow it.

SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH: Sir, on a point of order.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): No point of order. I have given my ruling. You can go to the Chairman if you like. (Interruptions) My ruling is final. This is irrelevant and it has nothing to do with the question of price rise which is being discussed.

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : महोदय, उस कुर्सी की मर्यादा है । आप उस कुर्सी पर बैठकर . . . (व्यवधान) . . .

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): No, no. I am not Jagesh Desai here. You have to respect the Chair.

SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH: I am respecting the Chair. But the Chair also . . .

*Not recorded.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): I am not going to revise my ruling. No, no.

SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH: Why?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): Because it is irrelevant.

SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH: How is it irrelevant? . .

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): I have given the reasons.

SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH: But how is it irrelevant?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): It is for me to decide, not you.

SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH: You will have to say how it is irrelevant.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): You can meet the Chairman. Prof. Bhattacharjee.

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE (West Bengal): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, there has been a discussion on the issue from any aspects. To me, after going through the statement of the Minister again and again, it seems that in a way it is self-contradictory, as perhaps it could not but be. He starts with expressing concern at the rising trend of prices. The term has been very carefully chosen committing nothing. But concern has been unmistakably expressed. The fact which is placed before the House is that this year's price rise has been the least in five years' time. In other respects also, he says that the increase has been less, whereas the facts are to the contrary. As Mr. Kulkarni pointed out, without elaborating, our concern should be the consumer price index or the retail price index and not the wholesale price index. The hon. Member quoted the increase

[Prof. Sourendra Bhattacharjee]

the price of moong and arhar to be to the extent of 70 per cent in one case and in another more than 33 per cent. There are other items in the essential commodities, like rice, wheat, edible oil, kerosene oil, paper, sugar etc. where it will be seen that the increase has been, from the experience of the people, much more than what has been stated here. Here the Minister has very skilfully used the statement to suppress the actual facts. If the purpose of the discussion is to bring out the actual situation obtaining in the country and be assured that remedial measures are being taken by the Government, the Minister, in the first place, has refused to acknowledge that there has been price rise to the extent described by the Members. He has done it in anticipation. Thereafter the measures enumerated by him are: increased production and availability, without stating what steps the Government took to increase production and to ensure availability. The question of availability is a big question mark. More than three lakh, according to this statement, fair price shops have been opened throughout the country. But most of these shops, as is well known, particularly in the rural areas, and also in urban areas, suffer from lack of availability of essential commodities to be distributed to the customers. If that situation is not recognized and just a figure is quoted, it will be very deceptive and that deceptive thing has been done by the Minister in the statement which has been placed before the House.

The third item is stringent measures. Stringent measures in respect of what? That has not been stated. Trust everybody would ask for stringent measures and, therefore, without enumerating what those measures are, this statement has been made.

Then, monitoring. If actually stringent measures are there, there could be monitoring.

But the conclusion is the most glaring one where the Minister has re-

ferred to good rains in the country and pinned all his expectations on good rain—to expect that prices would come down. The Government has no mechanism to bring down the prices. I remember a Food Minister once in his replying praying to God that there would be good rain and the crisis would be overcome. This is, practically, a variant of that very thing. If the Government has to depend just on the vagaries of Nature, without having any definite course of action to bring down the prices, then what is the use of a Government remaining there? Then let us depend upon Nature which would bring down the prices or raise the price! That is what has been stated here. Such a fatalistic statement on the part of a Minister would only create a greater lack of confidence in the capacity of the Government to deal with the situation. I would like to be assured by the Minister that this reading of the concluding part of his statement is not the real intention of the Government but the Government has some programme up its sleeve for bringing down the prices. Otherwise, if this rise in prices continues unabated, a point is sure to come when people's anger will burst forth in a manner which will recoil on the Government itself.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA (Bihar):

Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for having given me this opportunity. I have only a few points to make apart from the points which have been made by honourable Members speaking from both sides.

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : यह श्री हिंदी इलाके के हैं, लेकिन अंग्रेजी में बोल रहे हैं ।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री जगेश देसाई) : वह जिस भाषा में चाहें, बोल सकते हैं ।

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Sir, the Minister, in his statement, has also referred to the fact that drought has been largely responsible for this year's

price rise, and this is the constant refrain in all Government publications. Whenever the Government gets an opportunity to give an explanation, it says that the reason for last year's inflation was the drought... (Interruptions)

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : मैं सदन से वाक ब्राउट करता हूँ ।

(यहाँ पर माननीय सदस्य सदन से उठकर चले गए ।)

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: He says that drought is the main culprit for last year's inflation. Now he has accepted, and even in Government publications, that last year's inflation was the highest rate of inflation which was recorded in this whole decade of the 1980's. Now, the points which I want to make are these. Drought alone is not the culprit. It will be entirely wrong economic thinking to suggest that drought is the only culprit which has been responsible for the increase in prices. Drought, of course, has played a role. But, to my mind, Sir, the most important reason for the increase in inflation which has been a secular trend going on for the last few years, has been the fact that the Government spending has gone up by leaps and bounds, and Government spending is reflected not only in the higher cost of administration and a lower outlay on development but also in burgeoning budgetary deficits. The point which I want to make, Sir, is that budgetary deficit has been constantly increasing since 1984-85. It was Rs. 3,748 crores. It went up to Rs. 8,266 crores. It came down to Rs. 6,080 crores. In 1988-89 it is projected to be Rs. 7,484 crores. My point, Sir, is that it is this budgetary deficit which is largely responsible for the price rise which we are facing today. If you look at the composition of the price rise, you will find that the price of the essential commodities has been going up much faster than the general price level. Why? There must be some explanation which the Government should be able

to offer on why it is that the wholesale price index has gone up more than the consumer price index. They are out of line. The explanation which has been offered by economists is that the profit margins not only of the producers but also of the traders has gone up. In the meanwhile there has been no check imposed by the Government on the profit margins of the producers and the traders. That is what explains the out-of-line growth or rise in the wholesale price index and the consumer price index.

The other point which I would like to make is that it is the Government's claim that though there has been drought, they have through a number of fair-price shops, kept up the supply of essential commodities. The point, Sir, is, if essential commodities' supply has been kept up at a level at which it should have been kept up, why is it that the prices have increased? We know, for instance, that in the case of sugar, the domestic availability is more than the domestic requirement. Why is it then that the price of sugar has also gone up? In fact, the administered price of sugar has been raised. If you look at it in detail, Sir, you will find that sugar, edible oil, pulses, cereals, for instance, account for the largest chunk of price rise. If you add to that the administered price, then, the whole mystery is clear. This accounts for the total price rise, the total inflation in this country. For this there is no other explanation except, unfortunately, for me to put the blame squarely on the Government's door. Now, price rise is a matter of economic management.

The last point which I would like to make in this connection is that the whole policy that the Government has followed since 1984-85 is a very elitist policy, and it has led to a tremendous deficit in foreign trade. You are aware of it, Sir. The OGL has been expanded. There has been liberalisation of imports, there has been liberalisation in licensing. The result has been pressures have developed on domestic industries. The

[Shri Yashwant Sinha]

other day it was answered perhaps in the other House in reply to a question that the number of sick units, small-scale sick units has gone up to 1,60,000. It was only 23,000 in 1980. Similarly, a number of large scale units involving thousands of crores of rupees of public money today are lying sick. Why is it so of all these industries? The basic reason is that we have allowed liberal imports even at the cost of tremendous distortion in our balance of payments and foreign trade positions. Now, it is this which is causing all this. It is the consumerist policy of the Government. We have laid emphasis on mass consumption items, we have laid emphasis on wage goods either on their production or distribution. If we do not do this the prices will continue to rise. Therefore, I would suggest that the Government must immediately take note of the very serious situation which is prevailing now.

I am not taken in by the figures which are given here. These are weekly figures and they are not of any consequence. The Government must reduce its expenditure. This is my first suggestion. It must cut all its wasteful expenditure. There is no reason why the Government should spend money on wasteful things, which are not going to cause any increase in production. Then the Government through these methods must be able to reduce its Budgetary deficit. This year will be the acid test. The Seventh Plan is already dead. Let us try and save whatever is left and save the Eighth Plan. The emphasis in future through economic, fiscal and monetary policies must be on the increased production and better distribution of mass consumption items and wage goods.

श्री सुख राम : माननीय उपाध्यक्ष जी, ध्यानाकर्षण प्रस्ताव के माध्यम से आवश्यक वस्तुओं के बारे में कीमतें बढ़ने के बारे में यहां पर जो चर्चा हुई है,

मैंने अपने स्टेटमेंट में भी उसका जिक्र किया है कि कीमतें बढ़ने से हमारी भी चिन्ता है और आवश्यक वस्तुओं की कीमतें बढ़ें, उससे किसी को खुशी नहीं होती है, चाहे वह इस पक्ष में हो या उस पक्ष में हो। मगर एक बात मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि जब हम इस माननीय सदन में बात करें तो हमारी विचारधारा संतुलित होनी चाहिए। हमें वह चीजें नहीं बोलनी हैं जो कि कीमतों को बढ़ाने में एक हिस्सा है, जरूरी है। हम अगर अपनी सातवीं पंचवर्षीय योजना का अध्ययन करें तो हमने उसमें माना है कि पांच प्रतिशत कीमतों में वृद्धि प्रतिवर्ष हो सकती है, यह हमने माना है।

अपने फिस्कल पालिसी का जिक्र किया। उसके बारे में मैं आपसे सिर्फ इतना ही कहना चाहता हूं कि डेफिसिट फाइनेंसिंग हर देश के बजट का एक हिस्सा है। जो भी विकासशील देश हैं, अमेरिका जैसा देश भी आज डेफिसिट फाइनेंसिंग करता है और डेफिसिट फाइनेंसिंग इसलिए भी जरूरी है कि कीमतों में इजाफा होना यह इनबिल्ट सिस्टम में आ जाता है। मगर जहां अर्थ व्यवस्था का विस्तार हो, जहां आप डेवलपमेंट में आगे बढ़ना चाहते हैं वहां आपको डेफिसिट फाइनेंसिंग करना पड़ता है मनी स्पलाई आपको ज्यादा करनी है जिनकी वजह से कुछ हद तक मुद्रा स्फीति बढ़ती है।

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Are you aware the rate of inflation has touched the double digit figure? And you are defending the deficit financing.

SHRI SUKH RAM: I have noted all your points. Please let me reply. You have already spoken whatever you wanted to speak.

श्री सुख राम : तो मैं आपसे यह निवेदन कर रहा था कि सबसे बड़ी बात देखने की यह है कि इस सारी अर्थ-व्यवस्था को आप बढ़ाते हैं, उसमें मनी स्पलाई करते हैं तो हमें देखना यह है कि जो

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:

उससे मुद्दा स्वीकृति बढ़ती है, जो इनफ्लेशन होता है वह किस हद तक होता है। इस हद तक वह न बढ़े कि देश पर उससे बोझ बढ़े। अभी मैं अपने स्टेटमेंट में भी कहा और माननीय सदस्यों ने इसको माना भी कि हमारी जो पिछली जुलाई से इस वर्ष जुलाई तक की जो कीमतें हैं होलसेल प्राइस 7.5 परसेंट बढ़ी। यह जो भी मैंने कहा इसी स्टेटमेंट में आपका ध्यान आकर्षित किया है कि 1979-80 में जब आप सत्ता में थे, विरोधी दल सत्ता में था उस समय 21.4 परसेंट था...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: This is absolutely politicising of an economic problem. You are taking the cue from the Janata Government failures.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): He is bringing out the facts. Anyhow I have said something about that in my speech.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Janata Government has failed. Therefore, he is failing.

श्री सुख राम : आपको तकलीफ हो सकती है। मैंने तो अपनी स्टेटमेंट में इस बात को लिखा है। मैं कोई बाहर की बात नहीं कर रहा हूँ। अगर आपने उस समय की इकोनोमी को ठीक ढंग से चलाया या आज हम उस को ठीक ढंग से चला रहे हैं तो सब के सामने है। हम एक बात को नहीं भूल सकते कि जब हम कीमतों की बढ़ोतरी के बारे में बात कर रहे हैं तो पिछले वर्ष एक बहुत बड़ा डाउट, सूखा पड़ा था। उसके साथ-साथ कहीं बाढ़ थी। इतनी बड़ी प्राकृतिक विपदा शायद ही पिछले 100 सालों में कभी आयी हो। हालांकि 1979-80 में सूखा पड़ा मगर वह इतना भयंकर नहीं था जितना कि पिछले वर्ष पड़ा था। मैं तो समझता हूँ इस सरकार को उस अरसे के लिए बढ़ाई मिलनी चाहिए कि 21 मिलियन टन से ज्यादा अनाज अपने भंडार से निकाल कर सारे राष्ट्र को और खासतौर पर जिन सूबों में सूखा पड़ा था

Importance

उत्तको भेजा। गौरव की बात है कि एक भी व्यक्ति भूख से मरने नहीं दिया। सब जगह उसको पहुंचाया। कम से कम इतना श्रेय तो हमें दे दीजिए...

श्री यशवंत सिन्हा : कालाहांडी में क्या हुआ था ?

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: What about Kalahandi? People died of starvation in Kalahandi. The Minister is blind to facts.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: It is very unfortunate.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, may I know whether Kalahandi is in India or outside? The Government reports says "There have been starvation deaths." The Minister says "no".

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): He says that the Government has not allowed even a single starvation death.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: My point is Kalahandi.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): He says that the Government has sent foodgrains to that State also.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): The hon. Minister meant that the Central Government made all efforts to see that the State Governments are not short of foodgrains.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: It is very unfortunate that Mr. Rajesh Pilot had to interpret for Mr. Sukh Ram.

... (Interruptions) ...

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: If you misunderstand him, it is my right to rectify it.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:

It is not your job to rectify. The Minister concerned can do. You cannot come to his aid.

श्री सुख राम : मैं आप से कह रहा था कि केन्द्रीय सरकार ने सभी राज्यों को पिछले वर्ष जितनी-जितनी जिस राज्य की आवश्यकता थी उन की उस आवश्यकता को पूरा किया। जैसा अभी कुलकर्णी जी ने कहा, यह ठीक है अनाज हम देते हैं सभी राज्यों को लेकिन फ़ैयर प्राइस शाप्स द्वारा लोगों तक पहुंचाने का जहां तक ताल्लुक है वह राज्य सरकारों का है। वह उसे ठीक ढंग से निभाती है और निभा रही है। इस बात का भी जिक्र हुआ कि अभी कुछ राज्यों के अनाज में कमी कर दी गयी। इसका भी जिक्र हुआ कि प्रोक्योरमेंट इस वर्ष कम हुआ। राज्यों की आवश्यकता को शायद हम पूरा नहीं कर सके इस प्रकार की शंकाएं यहां जाहिर की गयी। इसमें एक बात आपके माध्यम से माननीय सदन को बताना चाहता हूं कि अभी जो सप्ताहों का जिक्र किया गया, मैं इस साल की बात कर रहा हूं जो 1988 को अप्रैल से लेकर जुलाई तक छः महीने हैं उनमें हमारा आफ टेक राज्यों को भेजा गया, अनाज भेजा गया, वह 9.27 मिलियन टन था और जब कि पिछले वर्ष स्थिति और भी ज्यादा खराब थी, छः महीनों में 7.85 मिलियन टन अनाज का टेक आफ था। इस तरह से 18 प्रतिशत हमने इन छः महीनों में राज्यों को अनाज ज्यादा भेजा है। एक बात मैं माननीय सदस्यों को और याद दिलाना चाहता हूं कि यह जो फूड का सबजेक्ट है यह स्टेट सबजेक्ट है। जहां तक केन्द्रीय सरकार का ताल्लुक है, हम प्राक्योर करते हैं अर्थात् अनाज वसूल करते हैं। यहां पर हमारे कुछ माननीय दोस्तों ने कृषकों के बारे में बड़ी चिन्ता जाहिर की है। मगर जहां तक मेरा ख्याल है, देश में आज तक कृषकों के बारे में किसी ने सोचा है या अगर सबसे बड़ा हितैषी कोई है तो इस पक्ष में बैठे हुए लोग हैं, कांग्रेस पार्टी की सरकार है। हमने बहुत से कायदे कानून कृषकों की मदद के लिए

बनाये। लैण्ड एबोलिसन का कानून बनाया तथा और भी जितनी कि सानों के हित के कायदे हो सकते थे, वे बनाये। सबसे बड़ी बात यह है कि प्रोक्योरमेंट का कायदा बनाया ताकि कृषकों की जो पैदावार है वह एक सीमा से नीचे न गिरे। जितनी पैदावार उसकी होती है हम उसको खरीदते हैं। मैं यह भी कहना चाहता हूं कि चाहे उद्योग हों, चाहे व्यापार हों, कुछ ऐसे एलीमेंट होते हैं जो कि आर्टिफिशियल स्केअसिटी पैदा करते हैं और कृषकों को मूल्य गिराने में ज्यादा काम करते हैं। इसलिए हमने एक सीमा से नीचे अनाज के दाम न गिरे, प्रोक्योरमेंट का कायदा अपनाया। यह ठीक है कि इस वर्ष हमने गन्दम के मामले में लक्ष्य फिक्स नहीं किया है और हम लक्ष्य फिक्स भी नहीं करते हैं। हम किसानों को मजबूर नहीं करते हैं कि वह हमको ही अनाज बेचे पहले 166 रु. पर क्वींटल कीमत थी, फिर हमने 7 रु. और बढ़ाया। मैं यह भी कहना चाहता हूं कि जो सबसे ज्यादा किसी वर्ष में गन्दम की कीमत बढ़ाई गई है तो वह इस वर्ष में है और वह 173 रु. की गई है। हमारे पास वही किसान आएंगे जब उनकी कीमत 173 रु. पर पहुंचेगी। अगर किसानों को इससे ज्यादा कीमत मिलती है तो हम उसको रोकते नहीं हैं। किसान अपने गेहूं को दूसरी जगह बेच सकता है क्योंकि हम यह चाहते हैं कि किसानों को ज्यादा पैसे मिलें। माननीय सदस्यों ने उसकी पैदावार के संबंध में चिन्ता जाहिर की है और यह भी कहा है कि उसकी पैदावार में जो लागत लगती है उसको ध्यान में नहीं रखा जाता है। आप जानते हैं कि एक बड़ी एक्सपर्ट कमेटी बनाई गई है, सी.ए.सी.पी. भारत सरकार ने बनाई है जो यह देखती है कि कृषकों का किसी अनाज को पैदा करने में कितना खर्च होता है और उनको कितना मुनाफा दिया जाना चाहिए। उसकी सिफारिश पर केन्द्रीय सरकार कीमतें तय करती है। इस वास्ते यह कहना कि किसानों को उचित कीमतें नहीं दी जाती हैं, सही नहीं है।

एक बात मैं यह भी कहना चाहता हूँ कि पिछले वर्ष जो डाउट पड़ा उसका इम्पैक्ट इस वर्ष भी महसूस किया जा रहा है। गन्धम की कीमत बढ़ाई ताकि मार्केट में वह ज्यादा प्राप्त हो सकें। सदस्यों ने कहा कि आप बाहर से गेहूँ खरीदकर इस देश का फारन एक्सचेंज बर्बाद कर रहे हैं। क्या आप चाहते हैं कि हम अपने किसानों को इस बात के लिए मजबूर कर दें कि वे एक सीमा में हमें गेहूँ बेचें? जैसा मैंने कहा है कि किसान चाहें तो बाजार में ज्यादा कीमत पर अपना गेहूँ बेच सकते हैं। सरकार की नीति यह नहीं है कि किसानों को एक निश्चित सीमा पर अपना अनाज बेचने के लिए मजबूर कर दिया जाय। हमारे पास हमारा जो प्रोक्योरमेंट है, जो हमारा स्टॉक है उसमें हम हर वर्ष अनाज प्रोक्योर करते हैं। वह इतना हमारे पास है कि उससे जितना हमारा पब्लिक डिस्ट्रीब्यूशन है, जितने हमारे दूसरे प्रोग्राम हैं उनकी आवश्यकताओं को हम पूरा कर सकते हैं। बफर स्टॉक हमको रखना पड़ता है। मैं मानता हूँ कि बफर स्टॉक में कमी हुई है और इस बफर स्टॉक को पूरा करने के लिये हमने बाहर से गेहूँ खरीदा है। अगर हमारे पास पिछले वर्ष इतना बफर स्टॉक न होता तो उसमाध्यक्ष जी, आज हम ओली फैलाये हुए बड़े-बड़े राष्ट्रों के सामने जाते यहां के लाखों करोड़ों लोगों की आवश्यकता को पूरा करने के लिये। लेकिन यह बड़े गौरव की बात है कि भारत सरकार ने किसी भी राष्ट्र के सामने हाथ नहीं फैलाया। हमारे पास अपना बफर स्टॉक हो हमारे पास अपना अनाज हो इसके लिये हमने हमारी जितनी आवश्यकता थी उसको पूरा किया। इसमें क्या बुराई है? बुराई तो तब होनी अगर भारत सरकार आज भी किसी राष्ट्र के सामने जाती और कहती कि हमारी मदद कीजिये हमारे पास अनाज की कमी है। हमने इंटरनेशनल मार्केट से यह उस दाम पर खरीदा है जो वहां के मार्केट के दाम थे। इसमें शर्म की क्या बात है? आज एशिया जो एक विकसित देश है, जापान जो इतना विकसित देश है क्या वे इंटरनेशनल मार्केट से अनाज नहीं खरीदते?

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, one clarification. What is the price at which the American wheat is being purchased? What is the price at which you purchase from Punjab?

श्री सुख राम : आप बैठ जाइये, मैं आपको बताता हूँ। जो हमने व्हीट खरीदा है, पहले वह करीबन 70-80 रुपये जो हमारे यहां अपना व्हीट का दाम है उससे कम दाम पर खरीदा है। जो इंटरनेशनल प्राइस अब बढ़ा है उसके कारण अब थोड़ा ज्यादा देना पड़ा। मगर इसमें कोई शर्म की बात नहीं है।

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: He is avoiding the issue. What is the price at which wheat is being imported from America?

श्री सुख राम : आप जो प्रश्न करेंगे उसका आपको पूरा-पूरा जवाब दिया जायेगा।

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: He will not tell the truth.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): Let him complete. I will allow you to ask it later.

श्री सुख राम : अभी उस तरफ के कुछ माननीय सदस्यों ने वेस्ट बंगाल के बारे में चिंता व्यक्त की कि वहां हमारा जो अलाटमेंट है उसको कम कर दिया गया है। वहां बड़ी परेशानी है। यहीं नहीं, बल्कि अखबारों के जरिये भी प्रचार किया जाता है। असलियत मैंने कई दफा बताई है और यह कहा है कि आप जरा वेस्ट बंगाल गवर्नमेंट से पता कर दीजिये कि आया गली यहां है या वहां है। मैं अपने स्टेटमेंट...

SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY: We have checked it. We have gone through the records and the Minister is also on record.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): Now, he will be knowing. Let him complete.

श्री सुख राम : पिछले वर्ष जो वेस्ट बंगाल को हमने चावल दिया वह 15 लाख टन था और इस 15 लाख टन में से उन्होंने केवल 8.07 लाख टन उठाया। इसी तरह से गंदम जो हमने उनको दी वह 15.12 लाख दी जिसमें से केवल 7.70 लाख टन गंदम उन्होंने आफ टेक की है। मैंने इस बात को इसलिये कहा क्योंकि उस तरफ से एक बात आई कि वहां पर स्टॉक में नहीं था इस वास्ते कैसे उठाते। मैंने इसको खुद वेरीफाई किया है कि वहां पर सारे साल स्टॉक मौजूद था। जितना अलॉटमेंट वेस्ट बंगाल को किया गया उससे ज्यादा स्टॉक मौजूद था। आप मुझे को एक भी उदाहरण बता दीजिये। जब कभी वेस्ट बंगाल (व्यवधान) आप मुझे से क्यों नाराज होते हैं। आप वहां पूछिये (व्यवधान) वहां से मालूम कराइये जरा। यह जो आप कहते हैं वहां से पूछिये। आज बड़ा भारी प्रचार हो रहा है कि वेस्ट बंगाल को बहुत कम कर दिया है। हमने जो उनको अलॉटमेंट किया है 6 महीनों में जरा यह भी मालूम कर लीजिये। आप हमारी मदद करिये। अगर हमारे विभाग की तरफ से गलत इत्तेला मिलती है तो मैं अपने विभाग को पकड़ा कि आप हमें गलत इत्तेला क्यों देते हैं अगर आपके यहां से गलती हो तो हम पर नाराज मत होइये। और लोगों में ऐसा प्रचार मत करिये। इस वर्ष चावल का अलॉटमेंट 5.05 लाख टन पिछले 6 महीनों में किया जबकि आफ टेक 3.80 लाख टन था। इसमें भी आफ टेक कम रहा है। उसी तरह से व्हीट का है जो 5.12 लाख टन का हमने अलॉटमेंट किया और इस में 3.76 लाख टन का आफ टेक हुआ यानी आपने उठाया इतना है। तो फिर हमें काहे को दोष देते हो? वहां पूछिये। मैंने वहां के सारे स्टॉकों से मालूम किया वहां के वेयरहाउसों में कितना है।

SHRI ASHIS SEN: Actually the point raised was about allotment and actual supply. No question of quoting figures.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): You find out the figures and facts from West Bengal Government.

SHRI ASHIS SEN: He is making insinuations which is not permissible. During the last Session also he said the same thing in reply to one of my questions.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: West Bengal Government requested for an increased supply. Will the Minister assure us that the supplies will be increased?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): If they are not lifting it, what can he do?

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: They are supplying the worst type of food which is absolutely not fit for human consumption. They are giving a substandard type of food.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): Now you are coming to some other point.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will they comply with the request of the West Bengal Government for an increased supply? Will he agree?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): You cannot go on repeating your questions. You are not the only Member in the House.

Mr. Minister, talk about other States also.

SHRI SUKH RAM: If he listens to me, I am giving the basis of my argument...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: It is very important. West Bengal's rationing system is breaking down. My point is whether the Minister assures us that the request of West Bengal Government for increased supply will be complied with.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): Please sit down. He is giving his reply.

श्री सुख राम : अभी तमिलनाडू में कमी थी । उन्होंने एक लाख टन चावल खरीदना था । उन्होंने हमसे परमिशन ली जो हमने दे दी । अगर आपकी प्रब्लम है और भी लोगों को देना चाहते हैं तो आप परमिशन लीजिए । हम परमिशन देंगे । आप ओपेन मार्केट से खरीदिए । मगर सौ फीसदी केंद्र पर आप निर्भर नहीं हो सकेंगे... (व्यवधान)

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, let him say... (Interruptions)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): Why are you always talking about West Bengal only? ... (Interruptions)...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Let him say, "Yes" or "No"... (Interruptions)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): He was talking about Maharashtra and he was to talk about West Bengal... (Interruptions)

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: We want a simple answer. Does he agree to our request to increase the supply, whatever might have been in the past? Does he agree... (Interruptions)...

SHRI SUKH RAM: Sir, I am not bound to agree to each and every request... (Interruptions)...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: We have requested for additional supplies. Will you agree or not?... (Interruptions)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): How can he say? ... (Interruptions)...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, this is Rajya Sabha... (Interruptions) ... Sir, this is Rajya Sabha. We have to speak about the States... (Interruptions)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): He has heard you and it is him to answer... (Interruptions)...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Then why is he silent?... (Interruptions)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): I will allow you later. Please sit down... (Interruptions)...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Why are you protecting him?... (Interruptions)...

SHRI SUKH RAM: Sir, supply has been made. But they are not lifting it... (Interruptions)...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Please answer me straight. Will you increase the supply according to our request or not?... (Interruptions)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): It is for him to decide... (Interruptions)...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: You say that it is for him to decide? It is unfortunate... (Interruptions) ... It is extremely unfortunate... (Interruptions)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): Please sit down; please sit down... (Interruptions)...

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE: Will they comply with the request of the State Government?... (Interruptions)...

श्री गुरुदास दासगुप्त : हम लोग जो बोलते हैं आप लोग देंगे कि नहीं ।

उपसमाध्यक्ष (श्री जगेश देसाई) : उन्होंने आपकी बात सुन ली है... (व्यवधान) अभी आप तो महाराष्ट्र के बारे में कुछ बोल रहे थे... (व्यवधान)

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Since you belong to Maharashtra, he has talked about Maharashtra. But what about West Bengal?... (Interruptions)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): He was going to reply about West Bengal; he was about to reply and I reminded him also. But there was something else which came up... (Interruptions)...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: It is unfortunate... (Interruptions)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): What is unfortunate?

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: You are asking him to answer about Maharashtra and about West Bengal you are not allowing... (Interruptions)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): He just started and then he want to some other point.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: It is very unfortunate... (Interruptions)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): You should not make this kind of an allegation. It is very unfair, very unfair... (Interruptions)...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: I asked about West Bengal... (Interruptions)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): He has heard you. If he has not answered you, it is not my fault... (Interruptions)...

श्री सुख राम : जो मेरे पास आंकड़े हैं उसके मुताबिक महाराष्ट्र को पिछले साल हमने 70 हजार टन दिया । इससे ज्यादा कभी महाराष्ट्र को एलाटमेंट नहीं किया था । मुख्य मंत्री मिले थे, उन्होंने चिन्ता जहिर की थी अतः उसमें और बढ़ोतरी की । मैं सभी माननीय सदस्यों से निवेदन करता हूँ कि स्टॉक की पोजीशन को देखने हुए और जितना हम दे सकते थे उतना हमने दिया और जो कम से कम आवश्यकता सभी सुबों की है उसको

मानोटरिंग की यहां पर बात की गयी । इस इसकी मानोटरिंग करते हैं । सभी राज्य सरकारों को हमने कहा है । वे भी मानोटरिंग करती है । अगस्त 1987 से अभी तक 10833 रेड्स हुई हैं और जो लेटेस्ट हमारे पास फिगर्स हैं उनके मुताबिक 38.88 करोड़ रुपये का माल सौज किया गया । इससे जाहिर होता है कि उनके खिलाफ मानोटरिंग होती है । यह ठीक है कि खास तौर से आई०आर०डी०पी० और दूसरे जो पावर्टी एलिवेशन प्रोग्राम हैं इनके अंतर्गत चीजों की कीमतों और पी०डी०एस० तथा ओपेन मार्केट में चीजों की कीमतों में बहुत अंतर है । इस वास्ते अन्स्क्रुपल्स एलीमेंट्स की ब्लैक आदि करने की कोशिश भी रहती है । इसके लिए हमने राज्य सरकारों को कहा है कि ये आवश्यक चीजें गरीबों के लिए उपलब्ध होनी चाहिए । जहां-जहां शिकायत आती है उसको हम देखते हैं ।

अभी फूड ग्रेन की कीमतों में बढ़ोतरी पर बड़ी चिन्ता जहिर की गयी । हम भी इस बात को मानते हैं कि नहीं बढ़नी चाहिए । मगर एक तरफ आप कहते हैं मजदूरी की दर बढ़नी चाहिए, हम खुद भी कहते हैं कि मजदूरी की दर बढ़नी चाहिए, इनपुट्स जो लगते हैं उनकी कीमत बढ़नी चाहिए, वे बढ़ती हैं लेकिन फिर इसके मुताबिक जो कीमतें हैं उनको बढ़ना पड़ता है । जो सारी कीमतें बढ़ी हैं उनमें जहां तक चावल का ताल्लुक है वह एक वर्ष में 15.7 प्रतिशत, पिछली जुलाई से इस जुलाई तक और वीट में, गंदम में 9.7 प्रतिशत कीमत बढ़ी है । इसके साथ-साथ जहां तक एडिबल आयल का ताल्लुक है इसमें तो मैं समझता था कि माननीय सदस्य मुझे और मेरे मंत्रालय को धाई देंगे कि इसमें पीछे से बहुत बड़ा अन्तर हुआ है और एडिबल आयल में 9.6 प्रतिशत की कीमतों में कमी हुई है, जबकि पिछले वर्ष कीमतें ज्यादा थीं । उसी तरह से बहुत-सी चीजों में कीमतें उतनी नहीं बढ़ी जितनी आज यहां चिन्ता

उपसमाध्यक्ष (श्री जगेश देसाई) : पलसेज की कटिनाइयाँ हैं, पलसेज के बारे में बताइये ?

श्री सुख राम : हाँ, पलसेज के बारे में मैं यह बात मानता हूँ कि पलसेज की हमारे देश में जितनी आवश्यकता है उतनी हम पैदा नहीं कर पाते हैं।

12.13 लाख टन हमारे पास पलसेज है हालाँकि बावजूद इसके कि पि मंत्रालय से बहुत से कार्यक्रम हैं सपोर्ट प्राइस है कि वह ज्यादा पैदा हो मगर आम तौर पर आपको मालूम है जो कि गांव से ताल्लुक रखते हैं, जो जमीन सिवाई वाली नहीं है उसमें पलसेज भी करते हैं जिसकी वजह से अभी उत्पादन उन्ना नहीं है। बाहर से भी हम उसको लाने की कोशिश कर रहे हैं। एक तो ओ०जी० एल. में हम परमिशन देते हैं प्राइवेट ट्रेड उसको इंपोर्ट करे। उसके अलावा हमारे नेफेड है, एन०सी०सी०एफ० है, ऐसी संस्थाएँ हैं उनको हमने परमिशन दी है कि वह इंपोर्ट करे। जितने करोड़ अगर मुझे याद है 74 हजार मीट्रिक टन दालें इंपोर्ट की हैं। उसमें करीबन 66 हजार मीट्रिक टन हमने वह यहाँ उपलब्ध की है बाकी स्टेट गवर्नमेंट के जितने हमारे कंज्यूमर फंडेशन हैं और दूसरी संस्थाएँ हैं उनके जरिए हम बांटते हैं। मगर मैं मानता हूँ कि दालों में कीमतें बढ़ो हैं लेकिन फिर भी सच्ची है, दूसरी चीजें हैं, प्याज है बल्कि इनकी कीमतें मंहने कंट्रोल की हैं और बढ़ो नहीं दिया है। मगर अब चूक लीन पीरियड है इसमें कीमतें बढ़ती हैं। यह इसी वर्ष की बात नहीं है, हर वर्ष कीमतें बढ़ती हैं। मगर हमने इसको कंट्रोल करने की बात की है।

श्री गुरुदास दासगुप्त : प्राइस आफ आनियन, आप दिल्ली का भाव जानते हैं कि नहीं ? सीधी बात है।
Sir, I think he is getting subsidised vegetables for his household.

श्री सुख राम : अभी जो चीनी का जहाँ तक जिक्र हुआ बल्कि इस वर्ष सब

से ज्यादा रेकार्ड प्रोडक्शन चीनी का हुआ है। 91 लाख टन से ज्यादा चीनी इस वर्ष हम ने अपने देश में ही पैदा कर रहे हैं। मैं जानता हूँ अभी दो-तीन महीने में कीमतें बढ़ी हैं मगर उसी में ओपन मार्केट में जहाँ हम 4 लाख देने थे या साढ़े चार लाख मीट्रिक टन उसमें 2-3 महीनों से 5 लाख मीट्रिक टन चीनी हम ओपन मार्केट में दे रहे हैं। उसमें एक बात और भी आपको ख्याल रखनी है इसमें तीन हिस्से हैं। एक तो वह है जो शुगरकेन से करता है उसको ठीक दाम मिलना चाहिए। स्टेट एडवाइज प्राइजस और वह 27/- रुपए से 35/- रुपए तक है। एक चीनी मिलें हैं जो कि चीनी पैदा करती हैं और एक उपभोक्ता है। जो चीनी मिलें चीनी पैदा करती हैं उसको जितनी लागत है उसके ऊपर उसको इंसेंटिव प्राइज मिले तो आगे वह पैदा करेगा और उसी तरह उपभोक्ता को ...
(व्यवधान)

PROF. SOURENDRA BHATTACHARJEE: Is he justifying the increase in the price? (Interruptions)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): The subject is such.

श्री सुख राम : उसी तरह से उपभोक्ता को ठीक दाम पर चीनी मिले। हमने इसका इंतजाम किया है। बल्कि मैं तो समझता था कि इन सारे फेक्ट्स और फिगरज को देख करके यह हमें बघाई देंगे कि ढाई-तीन वर्ष से चीनी की कीमतें नहीं बढ़ो ... (व्यवधान)

श्री यशरंत सिन्हा : वाइस-चैयरमैन साहब, यह उन्होंने कहा कि चीनी का प्रोडक्शन बढ़ा है इन्होंने एडमिट किया कि इन्होंने 5 लाख मीट्रिक टन रिलीज किया है। उसके बावजूद प्राइज बढ़ी हैं। क्यों ? यह बात समझ में नहीं आती है। इसलिए हम किस बात की बघाई दें ?

3.00 P. M.

SHRI MOSTAFA BIN QUASEM (West Bengal): Sir, we understand

your problem. Had you not been in the Chair, you would have objected to what he is saying.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): I have not permitted you, Please sit down.

श्री सुख राम : अगर आप सुनने की कृपा करें तो मैं यह कहता हूँ कि पिछले दो-ढाई वर्षों से चीनी की कीमत जो है, उसमें करीबन-करीबन स्थिरता है ।

श्री यशवंत सिन्हा : चीनी की प्राइस आपने बढ़ाई है और आप स्थिरता की बात कर रहे हैं ।

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, he is exhibiting that ignorance.(Interruptions)....

श्री सुख राम : अगर केन-ग्रेवर को कम कीमत पर दी जाय, तब आप खुश हैं ।

श्री० सौरींद्र भट्टाचार्य : इधर जो ब्लैक-मार्केट करेगा, उसको भी कीमत देनी पड़ेगी (व्यवधान)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): This subject is such that nobody will be satisfied. I know it.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: There is no explanation for anything. What kind of reply is this?

श्री सुख राम : उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, यहां पर जो मुद्दे उठाए गए थे, उनका मैंने करीबन-करीबन जवाब दे दिया है और मैं समझता हूँ कि इस वर्ष पिछले वर्ष की बनिस्बत कीमतें इतनी ज्यादा नहीं बढ़ी हैं ।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): Members are more interested in knowing what other actions you are going to take during this festival season and the lean months. This is what the Members want to understand.

....(Interruptions)....

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA. Sir, he is saying that action has been taken against the people. How many people have been arrested?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): If he has got the figures, he will give.

श्री सुख राम : मैंने आपसे निवेदन किया कि यह जो जरा सी चिंता है, कम हुआ है इस वर्ष । मैंने कहा कि इस वर्ष ज्यादा हुआ है इन छह महीनों में बनिस्बत पिछले वर्ष के । हमने सभी राज्य सरकारों को लिखा है कि वे सख्त एक्शन लें, जहां ब्लैक मार्केट होती है या हो रही है और एक्शन सरकारों ने लिया हुआ है । जैसा मैंने कहा यह 37-38 करोड़ रुपए का माल जब्त हुआ है ।

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: I suppose you adjourn the House and give the Minister time to be briefed by his officers.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): It is not good to make this kind of remarks. You should not do it.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: What is the reply that he is giving?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): I cannot allow you to speak like this.

....(Interruptions)....

SHRI SUKH RAM: That figure is not available with me. I think thousands of people have been arrested for violating the Essential Commodities Act.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Thousands is no figure. What is the State-wise breakup? He is misleading the House.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): He will collect the figure and supply you.

SHRI SUKH RAM: This is given in the statement. 4011 people have been arrested.

उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, मैं इन शब्दों के साथ माननीय सदस्यों का आभार प्रकट करता हूँ । ... (अवधान) ...

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Sir, I have a specific question. What is the economic frame work which the Government has in which they want to control the prices? He has not answered that point at all.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): The subject of this Call Attention is very limited. It is regarding the increase in prices of essential commodities, and here the Food and Civil Supplies Minister can only reply as regards the rise in prices. And what you asked is for the Finance Minister. Here, it is only essential commodities and the rise in prices. The subject is limited.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: I concede. But then there is joint responsibility in the Government.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): The subject is very limited.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: (Pondicherry): Sir, in the kharif season, we have bumper stocks. There is a bumper stock in various States because of the monsoon. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government is still adopting the policy of importing wheat from foreign countries.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): Now, Mr. Das Gupta, you can put your question.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, it may be true that the Government of West Bengal has not lifted the full quota. It may be true in the past according to the statement of the Minister. But, Sir, since the Government of West Bengal, and the Food Minister in particular has stated that the shortfall in the supply or shortfall in the allotment has seriously jeopardized the rationing system in West Bengal and, therefore, they

would like to have a greater supply, my specific question to the hon. Minister is whether he would kindly comply with the request of the West Bengal Government for an additional supply in view of the requests made by them.

SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY: Sir, my question is whether the Finance Minister will be advised to change the economic policy so that there may not be any price rise in future.

SHRI VISHVJIT P. SINGH (Maharashtra): Sir, I would like to ask him one thing. The Maharashtra Government has made frequent representations, specially in the last two weeks...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): He has replied to it. You were not here.

SHRI SUKH RAM: Maharashtra has been given... (Interruptions) Sir, if my hon. friend from West Bengal has an open mind, I am very sympathetic to West Bengal Government. I want to solve their problem. But, Sir, he said, in the past lifting was not possible. But I have just now said that even during this year, even during these six months, they did not lift even whatever allocation we made to the West Bengal Government. I am prepared to discuss it. Let your Food and Civil Supplies Minister come. Let him convince that they could not lift because the food stock was not available in our warehouses. Then I will definitely see why this was not being done.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Will the Member also help the House to know what action the West Bengal Government has taken? (Interruptions)

SHRI ARANGIL SREEDHARAN (Kerala): Sir, one question about my State of Kerala. You have permitted West Bengal, you have permitted your own State of Maharashtra,

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): If you had drawn my attention at that time, I would have allowed you... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI ARANGIL SREEDHARAN: Thank you, Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, the Government of Kerala has complained that the Centre has progressively cut the supply of rice to Kerala. I would request the Central Government to increase steadily and firmly the supply of rice to Kerala. What is the reaction of the Central Government to this?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JAGESH DESAI): What is the policy regarding all the States?

SHRI SUKH RAM: Sir, Kerala is the highest taker of rice. Even at present we are supplying 125,000 metric tonnes of rice to Kerala and I have released 20,000 metric tonnes of rice for Onam function also. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI ARANGIL SREEDHARAN: No, Sir, there has steadily and continuously been a drop in the supplies. Is this a populist policy?

SHRI SUKH RAM: Any request which comes to me from any State Government, I can assure to this extent that I will sympathetically consider it.

Now, as regards wheat import, I have already made it clear that we have contracted for import of two million tonnes that was necessary to replenish our buffer stock and I think there should not be any objection.

SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (RAILWAYS) 1988-89

रेल मंत्रालय में उप मंत्री (श्री महावीर प्रसाद) : श्रीमान, मैं 1988-89 के वर्ष के लिए अनुदानों के लिए अनुपूरक मांगें रेलवे को दशनि वाला एक विवरण अंग्रेजी तथा हिन्दी में, समा पटल पर रखता हूँ। [पुस्तकालय में रखी गई। देखिये संख्या एल० टी० 6382-क/88]

[The Vice-Chairman (Dr. R. K. Poddar) in the Chair.]

DOCK WORKERS (REGULATION OF EMPLOYMENT) AMENDMENT BILL, 1987—Contd.

SHRI ARANGIL SREEDHARAN (Kerala): Mr Vice-Chairman, Sir, this is a simple Amendment Act. So I do not want to elaborate very long. We get only very rare occasions to support an Act brought forward by a Government which is very incompetent. I support this amendment because this amendment wants to create some accountability and responsibility in the department as far as dock workers are concerned. Sir, we are living in a country where accountability is almost nil. Some great thinker has said India is an effective functioning anarchy. So, when I see a silver ray of hope that somebody is trying to bring some accountability naturally I am encouraged to support. And when I speak on this Bill I say that another act of accountability has taken place in this country. With a high sense of duty and moral accountability the Chief Minister of Karnataka has resigned and blazed a new trail in the history of our political life. I hope by passing this Amending Act this Government will take into consideration other aspects of the problem of dock workers. I come from a State with a long sea-face. We live with dock workers and port workers. We know their problems. After 42 years of freedom there is a type of caste system in ports. A distinction exists between the workers who are under the Port Trust and the workers who are under the Dock Employees Board. The workers under the Port Trust get salaries equivalent to the salaries drawn by the Central Government employees. But the workers who are working under the Dock Boards, get salaries which are much less. Why should this system be there? Why should there be two yardsticks and two approaches to this whole problem? They have to work on piece-rate system. In the modern society.