

श्री शंकर सिंह वाघेला : सभापति महोदय, मैं समझता हूँ कि राज्य सरकारों को भी इसकी चिंता करनी चाहिए। हमारे पास कोई मशीनरी नहीं है और न ही हैंडलूम की वह जिम्मेदारी है, ऐसी मॉरल रेस्पॉन्सिबिलिटी है, फिर भी इनके लिए जो नई स्कीमें हमने इंट्रोड्यूस की हैं, उनमें हेल्थ इंश्योरेंस स्कीम और महात्मा गांधी बुनकर बीमा योजना है। हेल्थ इंश्योरेंस स्कीम में वीवर्स को सिर्फ 80 रुपए प्रीमियम देने हैं और इसमें तकरीबन 3 लाख वीवर्स ने इसका लाभ लिया है। महात्मा गांधी बुनकर बीमा योजना में वीवर्स को 200 रुपए देने हैं और इसमें तकरीबन 2 लाख 77 हजार वीवर्स ने इसका लाभ लिया है। ये काफी अच्छी नई-नई स्कीमें हैं, जिनमें स्टेट गवर्नमेंट की एजेंसीस या वह इनक्लूड न हो, ये डायरेक्टली सेंट्रल गवर्नमेंट की असिस्टेंस से हैं। उनकी इम्प्लीमेंटेशन में प्रोब्लम्स होती हैं, इसलिए हैंडलूम क्लक्टर्स को सेंट्रल गवर्नमेंट की असिस्टेंस से hundred per cent direct लाभ मिलेगा, जिसमें राज्य सरकार का कोई इनवॉल्वमेंट नहीं होगा। ... (व्यवधान) ... हाउसिंग स्कीम में भी वह हो रहा है, लेकिन इसमें राज्य सरकारों की ओर से जो प्रोपोजल्स आते हैं, उन प्रोपोजल्स के हिसाब से हैंडलूम मिनिस्टर को देखना है कि इसमें क्या करना है और क्या नहीं करना है।

Transport subsidy to tea exporters

*304. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the South Indian Tea Exporters Association has requested the Union Government for extension of the transport subsidy;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Central Government in this regard so that the Tea exporters from South India are able to compete with neighbouring countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH):

(a) No such request has been received by the Government from the South Indian Tea Exporters Association.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Sir, as the House is well aware, India was ranked as one of the top tea exporters in the past. But, now this rank has been snatched away by smaller countries like Kenya, Sri Lanka etc. The tea export from India is declining every year. After the disintegration of former Soviet Union, the situation has further deteriorated. I would like to know what steps have been taken from the Government side... (Interruptions)

Sir, I would like to know, though the South Indian Tea Exporters Association has not approached them, whether the Government is taking any interest to see to it that tea export is increased by way of some subsidy.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, the question relates to a subsidy that is being granted by the Central Government for tea exports through the Inland Container Depot at Amingaon in Guwahati. The hon. Member wants to know whether a similar proposal can be extended to exports of tea from the ICD at Coimbatore. The answer is very simple and straightforward that Amingaon has locational disadvantages. We are trying to promote direct exports of tea through Amingaon. The freight containers coming from Amingaon to Haldia have to go back empty to its destination. It is because they have to go back empty that the Central Government is providing a subsidy of Rs. 1.50 for every kg. of tea that is transported from Amingaon to Haldia. Now, Coimbatore does not suffer from any locational disadvantage, much less so, in comparison with Amingaon. The North-East has a special fiscal package, and it is a part of the North-East fiscal package that subsidy is provided to Amingaon.

श्री राम नारायण साहू: माननीय सभापति जी, क्या माननीय मंत्री जी यह भी बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि ट्रांसपोर्ट सब्सिडी अन्य राज्यों के चाय निर्यातकों के लिए भी उपलब्ध होगी या नहीं?

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, the transport subsidy scheme is available only for exports from the North-East, particularly, from Amingaon ICD. There is no proposal to extend this transport subsidy scheme elsewhere. But if proposals are made, particularly in respect of tea that is grown in remote and inaccessible areas, we can, certainly, examine them. Increasingly, we find that tea is grown in the hilly parts of Uttaranchal, Himachal Pradesh and in other parts like Darjeeling, where particularly organic tea, which is in great premium in the international market, is grown. We can, certainly, examine this proposal. For the moment, this subsidy scheme is available only for tea exports from the ICD, Amingaon.

SHRI SILVIUS CONDPAN: Sir, as I understand it, at present, transport subsidy is not available to tea industry. It has been discontinued. If it is so, I would like to know whether it will be re-introduced in view of the sickness in the tea industry throughout the country.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, we have a transport subsidy scheme, a freight subsidy scheme, for horticulture products, for raw materials and

processed foods. It does not cover tea. However, in response to an earlier question, I had already mentioned that there was freight subsidy scheme available for tea exports through Amingaon. But, as far as the overall transport subsidy scheme is concerned, it is restricted to horticulture products, in which there has been a liberalisation.

I want, through you, Sir, to bring to the attention of the hon. Member that recently we have increased the quantum of subsidy. It is 90 per cent of airfreight subsidy to Kolkata Airport and, for the first time, 50 per cent of subsidy to Delhi Airport and to Mumbai Airport because these two airports have better connectivity with overseas markets. So, we have substantially liberalised the freight subsidy scheme for other products. But, I am afraid, for tea, Sir, the freight subsidy scheme operates only through Amingaon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 305.

Market forces discriminating in fixing tobacco prices

*305. SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry is aware of the market forces that are discriminating in fixing prices and exports of export variety Tobacco between the States; and

(b) if so, what is the share of exports from Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH):

(a) No, Sir. No such matter has come to the notice of the Government.

(b) Does not arise.

SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Sir, the Minister, in his reply, denied....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Minister.

SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Sorry, Sir. The hon. Minister has denied that there is any discrimination being practiced by market forces in giving good price to farmers. There have been a lot of complaints in Andhra Pradesh against discrimination being practised by these market forces in Karnataka against farmers. Will the hon. Minister assure the House that he will inquire into the complaints regarding this discrimination?