

Foodgrains Stocks

*345. DR. M. M. S. SIDDHU:

DR. SHANTI G. PATEL:†

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) what were the foodgrains stocks in the Central pool on the 31st December, 1981, 1982 and 1983;

(b) whether there was a decline in the stocks in 1982 and 1983; and

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD): (a) The stock of foodgrains in the Central Pool was about 82.81 lakh tonnes on 31st December, 1981, 96.26 lakh tonnes on 31st December, 1982, and 119.50 lakh tonnes on 31st December, 1983.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

DR. SHANTI G. PATEL: Will the honourable Minister be pleased to state as to what stock position is considered comfortable and satisfactory so as not to cause food shortage, and, secondly, as to what stock position is considered comfortable and satisfactory so that it does not lead to rise in prices of foodgrains?

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: We have two things, one, the buffers stock, and the other, the operational stock. We feel that for bufferstock it should be 10 million tonnes—5 million tonnes of rice and 5 million tonnes of wheat—and for operational stock it should be 6.5 million on 1st April and 11.4 million on 1st July. This is the ideal that we expect. But as you know, the drought, the flood, all affect us. We try to go by this policy and try to have the buffer

stock as well as the operational stock. As it has been known to the House, the severe drought of last year had put us into difficulty. Now luckily we have a good rain and we expect a good crop and therefore, there should be no problem.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that is quite satisfactory. Do you want what to get hold of the buffer stock or operational stock?

DR. SHANTI G. PATEL: I want neither the buffer stock nor the bumper stock. I want the real stock position so that the food prices do not rise as they have been rising every year. It has been repeatedly claimed by the Government and particularly by the Prime Minister that the country is self-sufficient in food. Why are then foodgrains being imported every year, particularly in this year of bumper crop or record production?

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: As he quoted the Prime Minister, I will also quote what she said in reply to the President's Address discussion. She said that it is not a compulsion for us to import, but it is as a measure of abundant caution that we do it.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: I will take up the point where the Hon'ble Minister has ended. He says that the Prime Minister has stated that there is no compulsion for us to import foodgrains. Is he aware of the fact that on the 26th February 1983, addressing a meeting of the ICAR society, the Agriculture Minister, Rao Birendra Singh, said "No self-sufficiency in food—India still needs food imports"? In support of this or to confirm this, I have with me a publication—Operation Food a Reality—which the Hon'ble Shri Yogendra Makwana was good enough to send. It answers certain questions in the Chapter titled—Facts Retold. In It, it makes the observation that while India's milk production has gone up from so much as against so much, our imports of vegetable oil and cereals account

*The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Dr. Shanti G. Patel.

for 15 to 30 per cent and 6 to 8 per cent of the domestic consumption respectively. It means that our imports of food account for 6 to 8 per cent according to this official publication which we have the privilege of having. I would like to know if in view of the Food Minister's statement and the figures given here, will the Hon'ble Minister still assert that we are not under any compulsion to import food?

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: As it is known to the House, upto 1976 we were importing some of these things. After that we ceased to import. But the droughts of 1979-1980 and again of 1982-1983 forced us to import from outside. As for the present year, we have good stocks and we are expecting a good harvest. As I said, whatever stocks we have are partly due to imports also. As I have told you a good housewife or a good manager always looks into future also particularly as this country has been mainly depending on monsoon. We have taken abundant caution and there is nothing wrong that we have done.

So far as Rao Birendra Singh's statement is concerned, he should ask him in what context he said that. About milk production also, he will reply.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: A good housewife should be clear in the answers she gives. My question was ..

MR. CHAIRMAN: You should go home and ask it.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: We have to ask the wife of this House, not the housewife there. The question is: Are we importing 6 to 8 per cent of foodgrains?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall I tell you that you are mixing up three things?

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: A good housewife will never reply to an argumentative or quarrelsome husband.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: Now we have the other aspects of a housewife. He starts abusing when he has no answer to give.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let me tell you where you are going wrong and where the Minister is right. First is milk. You read out something on that. The Minister spoke of the food situation. Then you read something about oil seeds. These are three different categories. You cannot mix them up.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: I have not been understood. I said that in the context of milk the official publication says that we are dependent in respect of foodgrains to the extent of 6 to 8 per cent. It is an official publication which I referred to.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: So, if this is correct, then we are depending on imports to the extent of six to eight per cent in respect of food.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is not with regard to foodgrains, but with regard to oil.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: No, Sir. It is six to eight per cent in respect of foodgrains. In respect of oilseeds it is about 30 per cent. In respect of oil it is about 30 per cent, but in respect of foodgrains it is about six to eight per cent. And, Sir, this year also we have imported Rs. 325 crores worth of foodgrains.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is because of the drought.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: No, Sir. Drought was in 1979-80. Last year it has been a bumper crop. We had a bumper crop last year.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: Sir, I have said that this has been taken by way of abundant caution because, as we all know, our agriculture depends mostly on monsoon. So, Sir,

if I have imported by way of abundant caution, should the honourable Member appreciate it or depreciate it? I can only give him the facts and figures, but I cannot make him appreciate and understand the logic.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: Sir, the only point is that we should be given the facts and we should not be fed on false claims.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: I have given the facts.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Mahavir, you have been fed on facts.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: No, Sir. He should either confirm or contradict what I have said. But he is doing neither. He is talking of something else and not answering the question that I have put.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Satya Pal Malik.

श्री सत्यपाल मलिक: श्रीमान्, मैं एक बुनियादी बात माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूँ और वह यह है कि आपकी दृष्टि में हिन्दुस्तान की जरूरत के मुताबिक एक साल में कितने खाद्यान्न का भंडार मुताबिक या पर्याप्त है और मैं जब यह पूछता हूँ तो इसलिए पूछ रहा हूँ कि बंगाल में जिस वक्त अकाल पड़ा उस समय हिन्दुस्तान में अनाज की कमी नहीं थी लेकिन लाखों लोग मारे गये थे। क्योंकि उनकी परचेजिंग पावर नहीं थी अनाज वह खरीद नहीं पाए। उस समय अंग्रेजों ने हिन्दुस्तान से बाहर अनाज भेजा। तो देश में इनका जो प्रोडक्शन है वह बढ़ नहीं रहा है जो दूसरे अनाज हैं उनका प्रोडक्शन करीब-करीब 4-5 साल में स्टैगनेंट हो गया है और आबादी बढ़ रही है। तो मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या आप साल दर साल जो आबादी में बढ़ोतरी हो रही है उस लिहाज से भी कोई हिसाब लगाते हैं कि कितने चावल;

कितने गेहूँ और कितने मोटे अनाज जिसको कि गरीब लोग खाते हैं तथा कितनी दालों की आपको सालाना जरूरत है और उसके मुताबिक आपके पास कितना अनाज इन चार सालों में रहा है?

श्री भागवत झा आजाद : सभापति महोदय, इस बात पर जोर देने के बजाय कि एक साल में कितनी आवश्यकता है, सरकार इस बात पर जोर देती है कि हर साल अधिक से अधिक पैदा किया जाए और इस बात का सबूत कि हमने अपने मैनजमेंट काल में, उनकी तुलना में जिन्होंने बंगाल की बात कही, किसी को भूख से देश में नहीं मरने दिया। यह इस बात का प्रचुर सबूत है कि हम अधिक से अधिक जोर उत्पादन पर देते हैं न कि चिकन काउंटिंग पर देते हैं। इसलिए यह कहना सम्भव नहीं है कि हर वर्ष में कितना चावल, कितना गेहूँ, कितनी किलो दाल और कितने तिलहन की जरूरत है। हम इस बात पर जोर देते हैं कि अधिक से अधिक स्कीम अग्रिकल्चर मिनिस्ट्री में अनाज के उत्पादन के लिए और उसके प्रोक्योरमेंट के लिए हमारी मिनिस्ट्री में ली जायें ताकि सभी लोगों की आवश्यकताओं की पूर्ति हो सके। कोई एक वर्ष में पूछता है तो कोई कहता है फोरकास्ट क्या है 2000 ए० डी० में कितना होगा। मैं इससे सहमत नहीं हूँ लेकिन देश की बढ़ती आबादी को देखते हुए उत्पादन को बढ़ाया जाए यह हम देखते हैं और माननीय सदस्य ने कहा कि यह नहीं बढ़ रहा है तो मैं आपको आंकड़े देकर बता देता हूँ। उदाहरण के लिए चावल का उत्पादन 1977-78 में 52.67 मिलियन टन था, 1978-79 में 53.77 मिलियन टन हुआ, 1979-80 में जो विशेष वर्ष आपके शासन का था उसमें 42.33 मिलियन टन हो गया, 1980-81 में हमने उसको बढ़ाकर 53.63 मिलियन टन किया, 1981-82 में

53.25 मिलियन टन किया। इस साल हम उम्मीद करते हैं कि यह 55 से 57 मिलियन टन होगा। चावल के सम्बन्ध में अभी हमारा प्रोडक्शन लगभग 57.55 मिलियन टन के आसपास है। इसमें हमारी कठिनाई है, लेकिन जहाँ तक गेहूँ का प्रश्न है...

श्री सत्यपाल मलिक : मैंने मोटे अनाज का पूछा कि आबादी के अनुपात में क्या हुआ ?

श्री भागवत झा आजाद : इस सम्बन्ध में सिर्फ एक कठिनाई हमारे पास है और वह है दलहन और तिलहन के बारे में। तेल के संबंध में और दाल के संबंध में हमारा उत्पादन ऊंचा है। यह बराबर समानान्तर जा रहा है। कारण यह है कि देश में जमीन तो एक ही है। उसके अन्तर्गत हमें गेहूँ भी चाहिये, चावल भी चाहिये, तिलहन भी चाहिये और दलहन भी चाहिये, ईख भी चाहिये चीनी के लिये। हर चीज के लिये हम इन्सेन्टिव दे रहे हैं। किसानों की अपनी प्रेफरेंस है इसलिये हमारे तिलहन में कमी है। हमारी आवश्यकता लगभग तेल की 45 लाख मीट्रिक टन हर साल की है। हमारे पास लगभग 29-30 लाख मीट्रिक टन अब तक रही है परन्तु इस साल 33 लाख मीट्रिक टन उत्पादन लक्ष्य है। यानी 12 लाख की कमी है जो हम विदेश से मंगा कर पूर्ति करते हैं। यही तिलहन के संबंध में कठिनाई है। लेकिन और उत्पादन के संबंध में यह क्रमशः बढ़ता जा रहा है। प्रसन्नता की बात है कि इस वर्ष कुछ खाद्यान्न की इस देश के सबसे रिकार्ड प्रोडक्शन की हम आशा करते हैं यानी 142 मिलियन टन होगा।

Replacement of railway rolling stock track etc.

*346. SHRI SYED SHAHA.
BUDDIN:

SHRI GHULAM RASOOL
MATTO:†

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 6000 kilometres of railway track requires replacement and that another 20,006 kms requires immediate repairs;

(b) whether it is a fact that 20 per cent of the total coaches are overaged;

(c) whether it is a fact that 65000 wagons are unfit and require immediate replacement and 25 per cent of the remaining are overdue for major overhauling;

(c) whether it is a fact that S&T gears at more than 1000 stations are due for replacement;

(d) whether it is a fact that S&T cent of lever frames, operating signals and points are also overdue for overhauling;

(e) whether it is a fact that 20 per weak and unfit bridges has increased to more than 3500 during the last 10 years;

(g) whether all these shortcomings have a bearing on the efficiency of service and on the accident rate; and

(h) if so, what are the remedial measures taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHOUDHURY): (a) Track renewals are decided upon on the basis of wear on the rail, loss of weight etc. but considered fit enough to be kept in position for running of trains subject to checks being carried out to locate any development of defects with ultrasonic track detector.

† The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Ghulam Rasool Matto.