

THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

Official Report

IN THE HUNDRED AND TENTH SESSION OF THE RAJYA SABHA

Commencing on the 9th July, 1979/ the 18th Asadha, 1901 (Saka)

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RAJYA SABHA

Monday *the 9th July, 1979/the 18th Asadha, 1901 (Saka)*

The House met at eleven of the Clock. Mr. Chairman in the Chair.

OBITUARY REFERENCES

MR CHAIRMAN: I have to refer with profound sorrow to the passing away of Shri Pranab Chatterjee, a sitting Member of the Rajya Sabha and Shri Rewati Kant Sinha and Shri Joachim Alva, two of our ex-Members.

Shri Pranab Chatterjee, born in 1929 at Chapra, Bihar, was educated at Gorakhpur and Allahabad University. An active labour leader, Shri Chatterjee was closely associated with several labour union organisations. Shri Chatterjee was a Member of the Fourth Bihar Legislative Assembly and of the Bihar Legislative Council in 1977-78. He was elected to the Rajya Sabha in April, 1978. Soft-spoken and mild-mannered, Shri Chatterjee, endeared himself to every one who came into contact With him.

Born in 1928, Shri Rewati Kant Sinha was educated at Arrah, Bihar. He was an eminent trade unionist and was connected with a large number of social and welfare organisations. During his tenure of membership of the Rajya Sabha from 1967 to 1970, Shri Sinha took keen interest in the proceedings of the House.

Shri Joachim Alva, born in 1907 at Udipi, Karnataka, was educated at Mangalore and Bombay. Starting his career as an advocate, Shri Alva took to journalism by starting "Forum" and soon came into prominence for his forceful writing and up-

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right editorials. An eminent journalist Shri Alva was associated with the All India Newspapers Editors' Conference. He was a member of the Indian Delegation to the U.N.O. in 1967. He was a Member of the Provisional Parliament from 1950 to 1952 and of the Lok Sabha for three consecutive terms from 1952 to 1967. He was a nominated Member of this House from 1968 to 1974. A distinguished parliamentarian with a long record of service, Shri Alva made an impact whenever he spoke in the House.

We deeply mourn the passing away of Shri Pranab Chatterjee, Shri Rewati Kant Sinha and Shri Joachim Alva.

I would request Members to rise in their places and observe a minute's silence as a mark of respect to the memory of the deceased.

(HON. MEMBERS THEN STOOD IN SILENCE FOR ONE MINUTE).

MR CHAIRMAN: Secretary-General will convey to the members of the bereaved families our sense of profound sorrow and sympathy.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Further rise in the price of petrol

*1. SHRI SURENDRA MOHAN -
SHRI S. KUMARAN:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to further raise the price of petrol in the country; and

tThe question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Surendra Mohanty.

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA): (a) Consequent upon the steep increases in crude oil prices as effected by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) w.e.f. 1-1-79, 1.4.79, 11.79, considerable burden has fallen upon the oil industry in the country. Various proposals are under consideration of Government to meet the situation arising out of these increases. Price increase on petrol is not ruled out

(b) It is premature to disclose the proposals because all of them are still under discussion at various levels.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHANTY: Sir, I would like to know whether during the last price hike, the quantum of escalation was disproportionate to the rise in the oil price and, if so, whether that would be avoided in the present instance to save the millions groaning under increased cost of living. And since the resources position is tight I would also like to know whether within the existing parameters, the exports cannot be restricted to meet the essential requirements of the country.

AN HON. MEMBER: Imports, not exports.

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: I think that the hon. Member's last part of the question relates to imports rather than exports.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHANTY: Yes.

SHRI GHANSHYAMBHAI OZA: A slip of tongue.

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: Well, Sir, it is our endeavour to reduce exports by increasing indigenous production —

AN HON. MEMBER: Imports.

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: Yes, imports, by increasing indigenous production. It is proving infectious, but

a good augury if that can happen some day. In 1977-78 we produced one million tonnes more than what we produced in 1976-77. We produced one million tonnes more in 1978-79 compared to 1976-77. Nevertheless, our requirement of imports for some years to come, till we really strike a big oil field somewhere, would be about 17 million tonnes of crude. So far as the question of rise in prices is concerned, nothing will be done to hurt the economy but the unavoidable cannot be escaped.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHANTY: My question was whether during the last price escalation the quantum of escalation was completely disproportionate to the rise in oil prices which hit the consumer very hard and whether the Government is going to avoid that experience this time. That was my question which was not replied. Now the other question I would ask is—I hope Mr. Bahuguna will kindly bear this aspect of the question in mind while replying—what will be the total involvement in foreign exchange beyond what had been earmarked for the import of petroleum and petroleum products and whether there is any differential in price between Iran crude and Saudi Arabian oil and, if so, whether attempts would be made to import more Saudi Arabian oil and give more preference to it than Iran crude? These are the three questions.

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: I am thankful to the hon. Member for conceding that he has put three questions to which he is not obviously entitled. Nevertheless, Your Honour has allowed him.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: That is like 'A' 'B' 'C'.

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: To part 'A' Sir, to improve upon the answer, the total outgo in terms of foreign exchange this year will be about Rs. 2,802 crores if the prices do not increase till the end of the financial year. Well, the OPEC are going to meet after another three months and

we do not know what will happen at that meeting. The total cost of the product and outgo on that account will be Rs. 842 crores. Now, so far as this is concerned, compared to last year's total outgo, this year's outgo till the current rates of prices—if they prevail—will be Rs. 1,215 crores more than last year. To part 'B' whether we will be importing from X, Y or Z, it is sellers market. We are trying from every possible source but there is no question of Government avoiding a cheaper crude. I myself went to Saudi Arabia but unfortunately so far we have not been able to secure any more quantities of crude oil than they already give us, which is about three million tonnes of the total 16.5 which we are importing this year. Part 'C': So far as the question regarding the effect on the consumer is concerned, I have not really analysed the impact of the last price hike, but this price hike, I can assure hon. Members, will keep in mind the total paying capacity of the consumer as also the burden that the citizen has to carry. But our burden has to be carried by us and by no one else.

SHRI S. KUMARAN: May I know from the hon. Minister whether the Government has any proposal to take effective measures to reduce consumption of petrol such as rationing the available supplies to priority sectors and reducing the number of working days for offices.

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: The whole exercise currently is being gone into with regard to the price factor as also the consumption factor and how to reduce consumption and what steps are to be taken. Everything is under consideration.

श्री रामानन्द दास : पेट्रोल पैदा करने वाले देशों ने जिनेवा की मीटिंग में पेट्रोल और पेट्रोल प्रोडक्ट से पैदा होने वाली चीजों के दाम काफी बढ़ा दिये, कूडआदि के दाम बढ़ा दिये और इससे भारत पर बुरा असर पड़ेगा। वैसे तो इनर्जी क्राइसिस आल ओवर दि वर्ल्ड

है लेकिन भारत जिस रूप में इनर्जी क्राइसिस से गुजर रहा है और यह एक डवलपिंग कंट्री भी है, ऐसी हालत में हम लोगों को इस का काफी खर्च वहन करना पड़ेगा। मैं सरकार से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि पेट्रोल की खपत कम करने के लिये कौन से एफेक्टिव कदम उठाये गये हैं? और नम्बर दो, मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि भारतवर्ष को इनर्जी के मामले में आत्मनिर्भर बनाने के लिये ग्राउन्ड इनर्जी, न्यूक्लियर इनर्जी, वाटर इनर्जी, एयर इनर्जी और सोलर इनर्जी, इन पाँचों तरह की इनर्जीज को पैदा करने के लिये क्या भारत सरकार ने कोई कदम उठाये हैं और क्या इन विषयों पर रिसर्च या अनुसंधान करने के लिये कोई व्यय निश्चित किया गया है या कोई कदम बढ़ाया गया है?

श्री हेमवर्तः नन्दन बहुगुणा : माननीय सदस्य के प्रश्न का जो दूसरा पक्ष है उस का उत्तर दूसरे प्रश्न के उत्तर में आयेगा। वह नम्बर दो के सवाल के उत्तर में सदन के सामने आने वाला है। लेकिन पहले नम्बर का जो सवाल है उन का, उस के लिये हम ने पेट्रोल की खपत को कम करने के लिये क्या किया है उस संबंध में मैंने कहा कि उन सब बातों पर विचार हो रहा है। लेकिन उदाहरण के लिये मैं कहता हूँ कि सरकारी विभागों से और सब लोगों से कहा गया है कि पेट्रोल का खर्च वे अपनी अपनी गाड़ियों में कम करें। उदाहरण के लिये जो कारखाने हैं, जैसे हिन्दुस्तान फर्टिलाइजर, उस के बारे में आप ने देखा कि वह इलैण्ड वाटर वेज के जरिये अपना फर्टिलाइजर देने की शुरुआत कर रहा है। लेकिन इस संबंध में सारे पैकेज स्टैंप्स क्या हैं वह मैं अभी बताने की स्थिति में नहीं हूँ।

श्री रामानन्द दास : मेरा जो दूसरा प्रश्न था कि हिन्दुस्तान को इनर्जी के मामले में आत्मनिर्भर बनाने के लिये

MR CHAIRMAN: Dr. Zakaria.

SHRI RAMANAND YADAV: He is prepared to answer. Let him reply. The Minister is ready to reply to that part.

MR CHAIRMAN: There is another question on that. Dr. Zakaria.

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: The Minister has admitted that it is a seller's market. I would like to know from him what steps were taken by him to procure the required quantities when about a year ago the price was at a particular level. After all he has estimate of what is required. Apart from negotiating at Government to Government level, now he is saying that we will get it from wherever it is available. He knows how a seller's market is operating. Despite the fact that certain private parties were prepared at that time, even beyond the commitment that might have been made by the OPEC countries, to give India the necessary quantity of crude oil there was so much of bureaucratic delay in arriving at some decisions that the commitments that should have been made earlier were not made with the result that we are required to pay a much higher price than what we would have paid if the decisions were taken right in time.

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: Sir, I would humbly disagree with the contention of the honourable Member. The Indian Oil Corporation, which is the main agency for importing crude oil, had entered into an agreement with the concerned countries for supply of crude, of 16.5 million tonnes, by September 1978 for the year 1979. But the Iranian trouble upset the whole thing because Iran was under an agreement to supply India about 5.5 million tonnes of crude. Also, some form of joint venture between the Hydrocarbons India Limited and the Iranian Government was there..

(Interruptions)

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: My question is not about the Governments, but about the non-Government agencies.

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: We do not want to touch the non-Government agencies *(Interruptions)*^

AN HON. MEMBER: What is the reason?

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: The reason is simple. Petrol is inflammable and it can burn the Minister also. *(Interruptions)* So, it is not a simple proposition.

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: Then you are also saying that you are prepared to buy from anywhere.

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: But right now I must say that insofar as this country is concerned, we have so far stuck to Government to Government transaction which is beyond any hotch-potch. Any private party or any private person brings in a number of things which should really, if possible, be avoided.

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: But we have to pay a higher price. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: But there is another thing which the honourable Member is forgetting and it is that no agreement for petroleum....

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Does it also include Mr. P. N. Balasubramanian!?

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: Sir, I mean the Government. When I say "we", I mean the Government of India and its agency, the Indian Oil Corporation. Sir, whenever an agreement is made, the agreement made in 1978, applicable for 1979, stipulated, as they stipulate this year for 1980, that for purposes of this agreement the present prices are subject to such changes as may be brought about from time to time consequent upon the OPEC decisions. It is a part of the agreement. Nobody gives you all the 10

million tonnes in one go. If you are given 3 million tonnes, you are given only 'X' barrels a day.

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: But a Jot of oil is available in the sellers' market.

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: I am not saying that we are short of oil. Am I saying that we are short of "it"? The question is whether it is cheaper than what we would be prepared to pay.. (Interruptions)

DR. RAFIQ ZAKARIA: It was much cheaper than now. But for saying your reputation. . . (Interruptions) you cannot make the country pay millions.

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: No question of reputation. We have at no point of time been lagging behind in the discharge of obligations in making adequate arrangements. But the Iranian situation upset the whole thing. Thereafter also, thanks to Iran, Libya, Abu Dhabi, Saudi Arabia, etc.. We were able to make up that shortage which occurred due to the Iranian situation and at a price which was the global price and the open market price has always been much higher than this price. All sorts of go-between claims that they will give oil, etc. are very dangerous deals into which I will not enter. (Interruptions).

SHRI GIAN CHAND TOTU: Sir,.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Sir. .

MR. CHAIRMAN: All are raising their hands. Yes, Mr. Raju.

SHRI V. B. RAJU: Sir, I would request the honourable Minister to inform the House as to what the consumer price is of one litre of gasoline in Delhi or in any other town for that matter and what the tax component in it is in terms of excise duty, customs duty and sales tax. Secondly, in view of the non-availability of fossil fuel in future to the extent that we need, will the honourable Minister think in terms of actually ration-

ing the essential requirements so that there is no misuse of it?

The third point is that the Minister is searching for oil in the interim period. Does his attention go to the East also instead of the West, like 'Mexico, Indonesia, etc? These three things I would like to know.

PROF. D. P. CHATTOPADHYAYA: Why not China, because of the improved relations with China? China is sending to the Philippines and Japan. Why not to India?

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: Sir, the price for a litre of gasoline in the Bombay market—the model base—is Rs. 4.04. This is composed of excise and customs component which is about 67 per cent.... (Interruptions)

SHRI V. B. RAJU: Sales-tax also.

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: Bombay sales-tax is about 9.5 per cent. The rest is the price—the installation charge, distribution charge, administrative charge, the Neptha surcharge as we call it, storage surcharge, and so on—charges in connection with the normal business of petroleum. I am talking of gasoline. So far as the question regarding rationing is concerned, as I said, there is a package of whole steps to be taken in relation to the current crisis, which is being studied, and the hon. Member's suggestion will also be kept in mind. So far as the question of purchasing of oil is concerned, for 1980, next year, we are starting negotiations with everybody, beginning with close neighbours, that is the Gulf area, and after we have exhausted this possibility, our traditional suppliers like the USSR, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Abu Dhabi, Libya, Qatar, Kuwait, etc. if we find that we still need some oil to be imported, we will certainly go anywhere in the world to get this source of energy. But I may state that oil is nowhere cheap in the world now; it becomes costlier as transport charges go up.

SHRI B. N. BANERJEE: The question relates to the proposal under Government's consideration to further raise the price of petrol. I would like to know whether there is any proposal under the consideration of the Government to fix a two-tier price for petrol; that means, a smaller price for the basic quota and higher price for free petrol to be available in the market. If so, what, according to the Minister, would be the advantages of such a proposal?

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: The whole matter is under consideration and I am not in a position today to give any judgment on any of these suggestions.

श्री शिव चन्द्र झा : सभापति महोदय, माननीय मंत्री महोदय ने बताया है कि बाहर के देशों से हम जो तेल मंगाते हैं उसके दाम दिन प्रति दिन बढ़ते जा रहे हैं। यह बात भी हम जानते हैं कि तेल के बढ़ते हुए दामों का असर कंप्यूटर पर पड़ता है। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या यह सही है कि जितना भी तेल हम को इस साल इम्पोर्ट करना था उसका आधे से भी अधिक भाग इम्पोर्ट कर लिया गया है? आप जानते हैं कि यह बात अखबारों में भी आ चुकी है। ऐसी स्थिति में भविष्य के बारे में आप क्या सोच रहे हैं? दूसरा सवाल मेरा यह है कि आप पेट्रोल के मामले में सेल्फ-सफिशिएंट यानी अपने पैरों पर खड़ा होना चाहते हैं तो इस दिशा में क्या कदम उठा रहे हैं? मैं मंत्री महोदय से पूछना चाहता हूँ कि भारत में कहाँ कहाँ पर तेल है और उसको टैप करने के लिये आपने क्या किया है। खास करके बिहार में भी तेल है और क्या आपने उसको एक्सप्लोर किया है? पूर्णिया-खसोल बेल्ट में जो तेल है और जो अन्य जगहों पर भी है उसके बारे में क्या आपने कोई अंदाजा लगाया ताकि हम तेल के मामले में सेल्फ सफिशिएंट बन सकें और हमें दूसरे देशों पर डिपेन्ड न होना पड़े।

श्री हेमवती नन्दन बहगुणा : मान्यवर, माननीय सदस्य को शायद मेरे उत्तर

देने में कुछ गलत-फहमी हो गई है। जो दाम हम बढ़ायेंगे वह दाम उस तेल के भाव को समझ करके जो अब तक आया है और जो अब आयेगा, सब मिलाकर जो बढ़ती होगी उसको देखकर होंगी। यह नहीं कि उस पर जबर्दस्ती बढ़ाकर बढ़ती करेंगे। यह बढ़ती केवल इतनी है जो कि हमको देनी पड़ रही है। इसके अलावा बढ़ती का कोई स्थान नहीं है। यह बढ़ती जो है वह भारत के ऊपर बढ़ गई है। भारत के ऊपर ओरेक ने दाम बढ़ा दिया है और आबल इंडिया लिमिटेड को यह देना पड़ेगा। शेयर होल्डर कितना कितना दे, यह बात अलग है, हिन्दुस्तान का प्रति व्यक्ति कितना दे यह अलग बात है। जहाँ तक आत्म-निर्भर होने का ताल्लुक है, मैंने निवेदन किया है और दादब जी के प्रश्न के उत्तर में मैं कहना चाहता था परन्तु भूल गया, क्षमा चाहता हूँ, कि हम ज्यादा से ज्यादा एक्सप्लोरेशन पर खर्च करने जा रहे हैं। जैसा मैंने कहा कि पिछले दो सालों में हमने 2 मिलियन टन उत्पादन बढ़ाया है। उत्पादन बढ़ाया वर्तमान क्षेत्रों से और नये क्षेत्रों की ढूँढ कर रहे हैं। मुझे नहीं मालूम और मैं इस वक्त नहीं कह सकता कि पूर्णिया जिले में तेल है या नहीं है लेकिन जिन इलाकों में हमारा कार्यक्रम चल रहा है उसमें गुजरात का एरिया है, असम का एरिया है और उत्तर प्रदेश का एक छोटा सा हिस्सा है पीलीभीत। इसके अलावा आंध्र का एक हिस्सा नरसिंहपुर है, गोदावरी का किनारा है, महानदी का किनारा है और अंडमान-निकोबार का एरिया है। हम चारों तरफ बंगाल एरिया इसको ढूँढने की कोशिश कर रहे हैं।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Goswami.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Sir, I raised my hand at the very beginning and you are not allowing me.

MR CHAIRMAN: I am coming to the second round and you are not prepare[^] to wait.

(Interruptions>

SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI: Mr. Chirman, Sir, Dhe hon. Minister has avoided answering some of the questions. His reply reminds me of an anecdote. Once Lloyd George was travelling in a car. He lost the way and asked a passerby: "Where am I". "You are in a car", was the reply. Lloyd George immediately told his friend in his ear that it was a perfect parliamentary answer. It is short. It is to the point and it does not disclose anything. Your answer to a very pertinent question reminds me of this observation of Lloyd George. Even before this increase in prices was announced by the OPEC conference, there was increase in prices on earlier occasions also and the Petroleum Ministry were told that the economy of this country will not be able to bear any further rise in prices and the middle-classes, lower middle-classes and the wage earners will not be in a position to tolerate any further rise in petrol prices. According to him, in the component of petrol prices, 75 per cent comprises of customs, excise duties etc. Has the Government made any study, as to whether the economy of this country and the middle-classes, lower middle-classes and the non wage earners will be able to tolerate any further rise in petrol prices? If so, what is the result of such a study made by the Government?

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: Sir, I am sorry. I just said that the whole matter was under consideration as to how to absorb the shock without impairing the health of the economy, either national economy or individual economy. Therefore, right now I am not in a position to say what the final view of the Government will be. But I can assure hon. Shri Goswami that the whole exercise will also involve the question relating to excise, customs, etc. The whole thing will be a package deal.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Sir, the Government today has no oil policy. According to Mr. Bahuguna, the require-

ment will be around 32 to 33 million tonnes in 1980*. The bulk of it will have to be imported involving massive foreign exchange. Naturally, we have to curtail the import of oil. If this is the policy, how is it that the Minister of Industry, Mr. George Fernandes, is encouraging and giving incentives to industries after industries to switch over from coal to furnace oil? The Minister is asking us to cut down consumption of oil. On the other hand, another Minister is asking the industries, particularly the cement industry to switch over from coal to furnace oil, and giving subsidies as a result of which today we are importing more furnace oil than ever before. And the coal industry is stagnating. How can you reconcile these two positions?

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: Sir, this is a part of a total energy mix and the question will have to be answered in its totality.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: This is a contradictory position. He said that we should cut down consumption of oil. But the Government is giving subsidies to switch over from coal to furnace oil. And we are importing furnace oil more than ever before. How can you reconcile it? As the Minister of Petroleum, he cannot avoid replying it.

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: Sir, it will be my endeavour to see that petrol product consumption including such things as the furnace oil, fuel oil for energy purposes is not encouraged, and is reduced. And in the ultimate analysis and I quite agree with hon. Roy that India cannot afford to substitute furnace oil for coal.

SHRI GIAN CHAND TOTU: Sir, in view of the successful experiment by some of the countries of mixing alcohol to the extent of 30 per cent, may I know from the hon. Minister as to what steps have been taken by his Ministry for mixing alcohol and also the extent to which it can be mixed? May I know the details of the steps taken?

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: Sir, we have constituted a working group months ago of technical people, engineers and administrative people. A group of experts headed by the Chairman of the Indian Oil has proceeded to Brazil to check up what is happening there. Meanwhile, we have also decided in this country itself to start two experimental outlets, one under the supervision of the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, and another by the Research and Development Centre of the Indian Oil Corporation at Faridabad where petroleum mixed with gasolene will be a mix of petroleum and alcohol. But alcohol production itself has got to be raised so that alcohol-based industries do not suffer. And we have to take a number of steps. Those exercises are being seriously taken on hand.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: Sir, the brilliance of the Oil Minister, he seems, he is taking out of the oily business. That is not possible because the hardship which is being caused to the people on account of the spiralling rise in prices is the hardship which cannot be got rid of by glib talk. In the four rupees and odd which we pay for a litre of petrol, how much of it comprises the taxes which we are paying? Is it true. . .

AN HON. MEMBER: He has already replied that.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: Is it true that over 100 per cent of that, otherwise, 50 per cent of that is going by way of taxes? (Interruptions) If that be so, is it not possible for you to absorb the increase in price by reducing the taxes rather than foisting the burden on the consumer?

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: Sir, perhaps, my voice did not reach the hon. Member. I repeat that the cost component comprises of 67 per cent of excise and customs, 9.5 per cent of sales tax at Bombay. So, Rs. 4.04 per litre can be broken up like that. Sir, if this country had no other Ministry

except the Petroleum Ministry, it will be just all right to do what the hon. Member wants. (Interruptions) Just a minute. I am not standing in defence of the Finance Ministry. We are already having a Budget shortage of about Rs. 1400 crores. Now, can we add on to that another Rs. 1200 crores? If so, can it be done from Nasik or Madhya Pradesh? Then certainly that deficit may cause more harm to the industry than we are trying to save the consumer from by not increasing the prices yet. But I am not saying anything today. All the aspects of total economics will be before us when we take this decision.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Kesri, please be brief.

श्री सीताराम केसरी : डाक्टर जकरीया साहब के प्रश्न के उत्तर में । पहले मैं मंत्री महोदय का ध्यान आकर्षित कर लूँ ।

श्री हेमवती नन्दन बहुगुणा : नहीं नहीं, बोलिये ।

AN HON. MEMBER: Sir, we have taken half an hour only on one question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What can I do? Everybody is getting up and trying to speak.

श्री सीताराम केसरी : डाक्टर जकरीया साहब के प्रश्न के उत्तर में मंत्री महोदय ने यह कहा कि मंत्री होने के नाते मुझे अग्नि से बचना है बजाये इस लिए कि मैं जला नहीं हूँ । तो यदि देश के हित में जलना था तो जलना चाहिए था जबकि देश का हित खतरे में था ।

Sir, you have replied to him that you would prefer to save yourself than be killed. I would like to know whether you will prefer to get yourself killed or save the country's interest first. So, I would like to know whether you are going to negotiate with the private concerns who want to sell to you petrol

or crude oil, whatever your needs are. I would like to know whether you are going to negotiate with the private concerns so that the hike in the prices which is going to be imposed is not going to be a heavy burden on our heads and we are able to get rid of this trouble. Would you like to reply to this question?

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: Sir, I have been totally misunderstood. If it is in the national interest...

SHRI SITARAM KESRI: No question of international interest.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Why not hear the reply?

श्री हेमवती नन्दन बहुगुणा : मान्यवर माननीय सदस्य को अच्छी तरह से मेरी वाबत जानकारी है कि राष्ट्र हित की अगर कोई बात होगी तो कोई भी काम करने में मैं चूकने वाला नहीं हूँ। लेकिन मैंने यह कहा था कि कोई भी प्राइवेट आदमी अच्छे और साफ

DR. V. P. DUTT: There is no such private supplier.

श्री हेमवती नन्दन बहुगुणा : तरीके का काम धंधा इस में नहीं करता है और तेल सस्ता मिलता नहीं है। जब तक सरकार से उसी भाव में मिल रहा है तो बिचौलिए से क्यों लें कम भाव पर अगर देने वाले बिचौलिए हों तो मैं इस आनरेबल हाउस के मैम्बरों को और जहाँ तक मेरी आवाज पहुँच रही है, यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि अगर ऐसा आदमी हमारे पास आयेगा तो मेरा हाथ भी जलता होगा तो मैं जला दूँगा। सस्ता तेल कोई दिला दे तो ले लूँगा। लेकिन बाहर का स्प्लायर आज कोई नहीं है। सच बात यह है कि बाहर के स्प्लायर कहना नहीं चाहता था पर दूबारा कहना चाहता हूँ। मैं इस बात को मानता हूँ। आपको और इस सदन को इस काम के लिए सावधान देना चाहिए

कि हमने अपना बन्दोबस्त सरकारों से ऐसा कर लिया था कि जिसके कारण हमको खुले बाजार का दाम नहीं देना पड़ा। खुले बाजार के दाम पर आज अगर पेट्रोल लेंगे तो वह दुगुने ढाई गुने दाम पर है। जो लोग उनसे ले रहे हैं वे इसलिए ले रहे हैं कि उनको वे सरकारें तेल नहीं दे रही हैं। इसलिए वे प्राइवेट हाथों से ले रहे हैं। प्राइवेट हाथों से तेल सस्ता मिले तो मैं कल लेने के लिए तैयार हूँ।

श्री नरथो सिंह : मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ कि आप तो पेट्रोल के दाम और डीजल के दाम बढ़ाने पर विचार कर रहे हैं पर अभी आपके इस विचार करने के साथ ही साथ पेट्रोल पम्पों से पेट्रोल और डीजल गायब हो गया है। लाइनें लग रही हैं। अगर कोई माननीय सदस्य तीर्थ यात्रा पर कार से जाये या पहाड़ों पर जाये तो उसके स्थगित करने का तो औचित्य हो सकता है लेकिन ट्रैक्टरों की लाइनें लग गयी हैं सोइंग का सीजन आ गया है परन्तु उनको डीजल कतई नहीं मिल रहा है। यह स्थगित नहीं हो सकता। अतः उनको डीजल मिले और उनकी खेती बड़े सके इस के लिए मंत्री महोदय क्या व्यवस्था कर रहे हैं, मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ।

श्री हेमवती नन्दन बहुगुणा : माननीय सदस्य की खेती के सम्बन्ध में चिन्ता से मैं अपने आपको जोड़ रहा हूँ और उन से इतनी ही प्रार्थना कर रहा हूँ कि सारे तेल के संकट के बावजूद हम राज्यों को पारसाल से अधिक तेल और डीजल देने की चेष्टा कर रहे हैं। हमने राज्य सरकारों से निवेदन किया है कि उसकी व्यवस्था करने के लिए वे आवश्यक कदम उठाये ताकि खेती वाला डीजल मिल सके। क्योंकि सच बात यह है कि सबकों पर

डीजल, रोड ट्रान्स्पोर्ट पर डीजल का खर्च बेतहाशा बढ़ रहा है। पंजाब का कोयला धनबाद से मोटर और ट्रकों से आ रहा है जिसके कारण डीजल पर जोर पड़ रहा है। उस जोर को कम करना हमारा कर्तव्य है। उसके लिए रेल से ज्यादा कोयला आये। उसके लिए राज्य सरकारें बन्दों-बस्त करें, किसानों के ट्रक्टरों को तेल देने की व्यवस्था करें, वह सारा काम हमने राज्य सरकारों को दिया है।

Energy crisis in the country

*2. SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA:
SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA:
SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHA-
PATRO:

Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the recent energy crisis all over the country;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what remedial measures are being taken by Government to solve the problem?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (c) A statement is placed on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (c) The Government is aware of the problems in the supply of different forms of commercial energy in the country. Coal, oil and power are the main forms of commercial energy and temporary shortages of one or the other of these have been experienced in different parts of the country. A good part of the reason for the shortages is that demand has grown faster than availability and steps are being taken to improve availability. The second reason is the late arrival of monsoon resulting in reduced hydel

(b) The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Bhupesh Gupta.

generation and simultaneous increase in pumping load for agriculturists.

In so far as coal is concerned, the overall availability from fresh raisings and stocks are adequate to meet the demand. However, due to limitations in coal loading and transportation, some temporary shortages have been felt. The coal loading and movement and coal supplies are being monitored closely by joint monitoring cells to ensure adequate supplies to the various consumers.

Some temporary shortages of petroleum products have also been reported. There has also been increase in demand and problems of rail movement. The price of crude oil has also risen sharply in the international market and in this context it is necessary to conserve petroleum products.

The power availability has improved in terms of increased generation and supply over the corresponding period last year. However, due to increased demand, delayed monsoons and local transmission bottlenecks, power cuts and restrictions mainly in respect of peak demand are still in force in several states. The power generation and power supply position in the various systems are being monitored very closely and measures are taken to improve the power availability on a continuous basis. These include ensuring adequate stocks of coal to maximise generation from thermal plants, repairing machines as quickly as possible, and operating and integrated systems in a manner to enable exchange of power from surplus to deficit systems.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, I am putting my question after forty minutes of the first question. The statement that has been given might have as well not been given because it contains nothing. There is nothing in it. Now, Sir, we find that since the last session, crisis has developed in