

SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHA-PATRO: Sir, the Government have not taken all these natural calamities as national calamities. They are only giving assistance as advance against the Plan assistance that they give to the States' for these natural calamities that the States suffer from. So, I am not very much bothered whether the relief is much or is inadequate or is sufficient because it is all the States' money that these people allot. Therefore, till that is changed and till the Seventh Finance Commission comes out with a changed decision on that matter, it matters little whether Rs. 2 lakhs or Rs. 2 crores is given 'by way of relief. I am very much interested in it because of the recent events of hail storms, thunder storms, tornado, cyclones, formation of tidal waves, etc. I am interested in the prevention of the same or at least giving advance notices of the same to the people. Therefore, my question to the Minister is whether he has taken up the matter with the Information and Broadcasting Department to provide community radio sets in every village so that this fact could be known to the people in advance and they could take some shelter before the event occurred.

SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: No special action in this regard has been taken.

Reduction of berthing facilities in Bombay Port

4. SHRI SURENDRA MOHANTY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government have decided to reduce berthing facilities in the Bombay Port for ships carrying edible oils to India;

(b) if so, whether the Government's decision is likely to result in a rise in the consumer price of edible oils and thereby hit the common man; and

(c) if the answer to part (b) above be in the affirmative, what remedial steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN-CHARGE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI CHAND RAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHANTY: Sir, I would like to know whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to a publication in the Times of India of 30th April, 1978, that the berthing facilities for edible oils in Bombay Port have been reduced.

SHRI CHAND RAM: Yes, the Government's attention has been drawn by an article published in the Times of India, but we have taken steps and now we have reserved two berths for edible oils and the third is also going to be reserved from today.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHANTY: I do not understand the rationale behind this answer. The Minister says that his attention has been drawn to the news item. Then he says that something has been reserved today. How does he reconcile the answer? I fail to understand this. The news item in the Times of India says that in pursuance of the inter-Ministerial discussion held on April 18, the Bombay Port authorities were directed to reduce berthing facilities for edible oils from four to one. Accordingly, the Bombay Port authorities have notified the importers that they should be allowed only one berth for the edible oils. How does he reconcile his answer to this fact?

SHRI CHAND RAM: Sir, I only say that there is a congestion as such on the Port of Bombay. But so far as this edible oil congestion is concerned, there are only three ships waiting and 17 other ships are waiting. For example, general cargo vessels, there are 11 ships waiting.

So far as the congestion of edible oils is concerned, we have taken steps to clear it up.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHANTY: Sir, it is a very serious matter. Now four ships carrying 40,000 tonnes of edible oils are waiting in Bombay for a berth. Each ship pays a demurrage of 6000 dollars a day. Now you calculate the demurrage charges for four ships if there are no berths. The demurrage will have to be borne by the importers, with the result that the prices of edible oils will shoot up.

SHRI PREM MANOHAR: About 20 to 25 ships are waiting.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHANTY: If Bombay handles 75 per cent and Kandla 25 per cent, why don't you divert these ships to other ports? If there is congestion in Bombay Port, why don't you divert the ships to other ports? Why should these fantastic amounts of demurrage be borne by the consumers which will immediately shoot up the cost of living index?

SHRI CHAND RAM: That is exactly what we have been telling the STC and the private importers that they should divert their edible oil ships to Kandla and Haldia Ports.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHANTY: Sir, it is a very serious matter.

MR. CHAIRMAN: True, but how can you go on continuing like this? It is for the Minister to see to it.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHANTY: Sir, his answer is not satisfying.

SHRI CHAND RAM: Sir, our Ministry has already issued strict instructions to the importers, may be the STC and the other private importers, that they should divert their edible oil ships to Kandla and Haldia Ports.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHANTY: Will the Minister assure this House that no demurrage will be paid on ac-

count of this edible oil? We want an assurance from the hon. Minister.

SHRI CHAND RAM: What I am trying to say

MR. CHAIRMAN: Can you give an assurance?

SHRI CHAND RAM: Sir, in view of the congestion at Bombay Port and in view of the fact that 17 ships are waiting—11, as I have said, are general cargo ships—I cannot hold out any assurance that these will all be unloaded at Bombay. They can be diverted to Kandla, I can, however, assure that there will be no congestion.

श्री प्रेम मनोहर : श्रीमान्, मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूँ कि यह केवल तेल की ही बात नहीं है। इसके अतिरिक्त भी वहाँ पर 25-30 जहाज खड़े हैं और बम्बई पोर्ट पर बहुत ज्यादा कंजेशन हो गया है और हम लाखों रुपये का फारेन एक्सचेंज डैमरेज में दे रहे हैं। तो मंत्री महोदय ने इसके लिये क्या प्रभावी कदम उठाया है जिससे कि बम्बई पोर्ट पर जो कंजेशन हो गया है वह कम हो और जो डैमरेज हम दे रहे हैं वह न दें और जब तक हम उन शिप्स को क्लियर कर देंगे ?

श्री चांद राम : श्रीमान्, हम कोशिश कर रहे हैं कि जो जहाज आ रहे हैं वह बम्बई के बजाय कांडला आये, हल्दिया आये, मद्रास आये या पारादीप आये। हमने कामर्स मिनिस्ट्री को इस बारे में लिखा है, इंडस्ट्री मिनिस्ट्री को लिखा है कि वे सीमेन्ट के जो जहाज हैं उनको बम्बई के बजाय दूसरे पोर्ट पर ले जाये। इस बारे में जो कान्फ्रेंस होती रहती है उसमें भी हम यह कोशिश करते हैं कि इस तरह का डिस्ट्रीब्यूशन करें ताकि बम्बई पोर्ट पर ही सारा कंजेशन न हो।

श्री प्रेम मनोहर : डैमरेज के बारे में आप क्या कहना चाहते हैं ?

श्री चांद राम : डैमरेज का सवाल जो है, वह तो इन्टरनेशनल कॉन्फेंस जो है उसका डिसेजिन है कि कुछ दिन इन्तजार करने के बाद सर चार्ज देना ही पड़ेगा। उसमें हम क्या कर सकते हैं? लेने वाले जो हैं वह उसको दूसरी जगह ले जायें।

SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHAPATRO: Sir, there are two problems that arise out of this question. One is to see that the imported things are got swiftly for the use of the consumers. If you reduce the berthing facilities at Bombay Port and therefore there is congestion and so there is demurrage, the other problem also comes in—that is, the problem of the price rising as far as the consumer is concerned. We are interested in two things: it should immediately go to the consumer; and it should go cheap also. Therefore, I want to know, firstly, whether he will enforce the berthing of these things at other ports; and, secondly, whether he will see that the demurrage that will be paid due to reduced berthing facilities at Bombay Port is not reflected in the prices that will be paid by the consumer and, therefore, if required, the Government will give a subsidy and supply these things to the consumer at the lowest possible price.

SHRI CHAND RAM: These are just suggestions and, I think, we cannot take action except to direct the other Ministries to divert their vessels to other ports.

SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHAPATRO: What about the price?

श्री नागेश्वर प्रसाद शाही : श्रीमान् मंत्री जी इसकी जिम्मेदारी से खिंसक रहे हैं। सही बात तो यह है कि मिसमैनेजमेन्ट की वजह से ऐसा होता है कि जहाजों को एक हफ्ते या दो हफ्ते इन्तजार करना पड़े और डैमरेज देना पड़े। इसका एफेक्ट जा करके प्राइस पर पड़ता है और कंज्यूमर्स को हायर प्राइस देनी पड़ती है। इसलिये

इसकी सीधी जिम्मेदारी गवर्नमेन्ट पर है। इसलिए जब यह तथ्य किया गया था कि बम्बई पोर्ट पर एडीबल आयल की बर्थिंग फैसिलिटीज को कम किया जायेगा उस समय यह डाइरेक्शन देना चाहिए था कि इतने से ज्यादा शिप्स यहाँ नहीं आ सकते—बाकी कांडला, हल्दिया आदि पर भेजे जायें। आपने ऐसा नहीं किया और इसके कारण इस समय 20-25 जहाज आकर बम्बई पोर्ट पर इन्तजार कर रहे हैं और इसका डैमरेज देना पड़ रहा है। जो यह हो रहा है इसका रिफ्लेक्शन प्राइस पर पड़ेगा और इसकी सारी जिम्मेदारी सरकार की है। इसलिये मंत्री महोदय को इसका जवाब देना चाहिए कि आपने जिस समय यह तथ्य किया कि बम्बई पोर्ट में एडीबल आयल की बर्थिंग फैसिलिटीज कम की जा रही हैं तो उस समय आपने डाइरेक्शन दिया या नहीं दिया और उसके लिये आपने क्या कार्यवाही की?

श्री चांद राम : जनाब हमारा अन्दाजा है कि आठ से नौ मिलियन टन एडिबल आयल आया और इसी आधार पर हमने यह फैसला किया है। बाम्बे की कैपेसिटी 5 मिलियन टन है, कांडला की 3 मिलियन टन हैंडल करने की कैपेसिटी है और हल्दिया कलकत्ता 4 मिलियन टन हैंडल कर सकते हैं। यह गाइडलाइन स्टेट ट्रेडिंग कारपोरेशन ने इम्पोर्टज को दी है लेकिन इसके बावजूद भी बार-बार बाम्बे में लाते हैं। दूसरी बात यह है कि आज कल फटिलाइजर का सीजन है। फटिलाइजर के शिप्स आ रहे हैं। हम उनको प्रायर्टी दे रहे हैं क्योंकि उनको आनलोड करना निहायत जरूरी है। ऐसा हमें डिप्टी चीफ मिनिस्टर, काश्मीर ने कहा है कि 9 दिन के लिए हमें वे बर्थ दे दें। इसी वजह से एडिबल आयल की कमी हो गई थी। हमारे पास दो-तीन बर्थ हैं। एक जहाज आज अनलोड हो जाएगा बाकी दो रह जायेंगे जो कि जल्दी ही क्लीयर कर दिए जायेंगे।

SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN: May I know from the hon'ble Minister whether he discovered this inadequacy of berthing for the ships only after his return from study abroad because he had gone abroad to make study about how such a problem should be tackled? I suppose he studied this problem abroad and has come to this conclusion. May I know whether what I have said is a fact? Will the Minister admit it or not?

श्री चांद राम : हमारे पास 10 मेजर पोर्ट हैं। सिर्फ बाम्बे एक ऐसी जगह है जहाँ पर ज्यादा कंजेशन है। बाम्बे को ही सभी पसंद करते हैं क्योंकि वहाँ पर फैमिलि-टीज हैं इसलिए हम कोशिश कर रहे हैं कि कांडला, हल्दिया, मद्रास तथा विज्ञाग में या दूसरी जगह पर जाएं जहाँ पर कम माल आता है। बाम्बे में जरूर कंजेशन रहता है यह केवल इस साल ही नहीं, पिछले साल भी ऐसा ही था।

SHRI SADASIV BAGAITKAR: Is the hon'ble Minister aware that this system is all working in an unsatisfactory manner? We are importing edible oils so that the consumer should get it at a lower cost. May I know from him whether there are any inter-Ministerial Committees looking into this matter? It is very surprising that the ships arrive and, possibly, the Commerce Ministry has no knowledge of it, and ultimately it is the consumer who is penalised. May I know from the hon'ble Minister whether there is any inter-Ministerial or inter-Departmental committee to look after this thing?

Secondly, I would like to know from him whether it is not possible for his Ministry to bind down the shipping companies to send their ships to particular ports, or is it entirely left to the shipping company to send their ship to the port of their choice?

SHRI CHAND RAM: There is already an inter-Ministerial Committee to look into these matters. They have been issuing guidelines to the various Ministries to see that there

is no difficulty at any port. That is the only thing. It is up to the companies to divert their goods to other ports.

SHRI SHRIKANT VERMA: Mr. Chairman, Sir . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Verma, will you please wait for two or three minutes for paper laying?

SHRI S. W. DHABE: Sir, I wanted to ask a supplementary on this question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is enough. Papers to be laid.

Written Answers to Questions

Naval Chiefs recent visit to Tehran

*365. SHRI HARISHANKER BHABHA: SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state the objective of the recent visit of the Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Jal Cursetji to Tehran?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI JAGJI VAN RAM): The Chief of the Naval Staff paid a goodwill visit to Tehran towards the end of April 1978. The Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Iranian Navy had visited India in March, 1977.

Foreign Aircraft over the Rann of Kutch

*366. SHRI N. P. CHENGALRAYA NAIDU: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a press report appearing in the Hindustan Times of the 18th April, 1978 regarding a foreign aircraft flying over the Rann of Kutch area in Gujarat;

(b) whether Government have examined the report;

(c) if so, what are the details of the same; and