

RAJYA SABHA

Wednesday, the 7th August, 1974 the 16th
Savarna, 1896 (Saka)

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

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

भारत में हॉप नामक पौधे का तस्करी
द्वारा आयात

*352. श्री नथी सिंह :

श्री श्याम लाल गुप्त :

क्या कृषि मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा
करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि 'बियर'
का कारखाना चलाने वाले कुछ लोगों
द्वारा भारत में ऑस्ट्रेलिया से हॉप
नामक पौधे का चोरी छिपे आयात किया
गया है ;

(ख) क्या यह भी सच है कि
हॉप की खेती के कारण देश की कृषि
को धक्का लगने की सम्भावना है ;

(ग) यदि हां, तो सरकार ने इस
तस्करी को रोकने के लिए क्या कदम
उठाए हैं ? और

(घ) क्या सरकार ने हॉप पौधों
की तस्करी में सहायता के लिए उत्तर-
दायी अधिकारियों के विशुद्ध कोई
कार्यवाही की है और यदि हां, तो
उसका व्यौरा क्या है ?

J[Smuggling of hop plants into India

*352. SHRI NATHI SINGH:

SHRI SHYAMLAL GUPTA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE
be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that hop plants

f The question was actually asked on
the floor of the House by Shri Nathi Singh.

J [] English translation.

have been smuggled into India from
Australia by some brewery owner:

(b) whether it is also a fact that agriculture
in the country is likely to suffer a* setback
due to cultivation of hop;

(c) if so, the steps Government have taken
to stop such smuggling; and

(d) whether Government have taken any
action against the officers responsible for
helping the smuggling of hop plants; if so,
what are the details thereof?]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI
ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE): (a) to (d) A
statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

M/s. United Breweries Ltd. imported, by air
12,000 root cuttings of hops from Australia
which arrived at Palam on the 19th May,
1974: The import had been effected under a
valid import licence issued by the Chief
Controller of Imports and Exports. However,
the firm had not obtained an import permit
from the Plant Protection Adviser as required
under the Destructive Insects and Pests Act
for any import to be effected by air. The
material was not also accompanied by a
Phyto-sanitary Certificate issued by the
Australian Plant Quarantine authorities as
required under the Destructive Insects and
Pests Act.

On a detailed inspection of the root
cuttings, it was found that the material was
infested with nematodes and root-rot
pathogens. The release of the material would
have been injurious to our agriculture and
hence the material was destroyed.

The import was effected under a valid
import licence, issued by the competent
authority. Since the import in question was
made under a valid import licence, the
question of any officer being responsible for
helping the smuggling of hop plants does not
arise. The requirements of Phyto-sanitary
Certificate and import permit of the Plant
Protection Adviser have been

prescribed only with the intention of ensuring that the imported plant materials do not bring with it may exotic pests or diseases into the country. The Government of India have established plant quarantine facilities at sea-ports and airports to prevent the introduction of such pests and diseases. However, in the light of the experience gained, Government propose to review the provisions of the Destructive Insect and Pest Act, 1914, to make them more stringent and comprehensive.

† [कृषि मन्त्रालय में राज्य मन्त्री (श्री अण्णासाहेब शिन्दे) : (क) से (घ) एक विवरण समा-पटल पर रख दिया गया है।

विवरण

(क) मेसर्स यूनाईटेड वीवरीज लिमिटेड ने आस्ट्रेलिया से विमान द्वारा 12,000 जड़दार हाप कलमों का आयात किया था, जो पालम में 19 मई, 1974 को पहुंची थीं। आयात तथा निर्यात के महा निदेशक द्वारा जारी किये गये वैध आयात लायसेन्स के अन्तर्गत यह आयात किया गया था। परन्तु, फर्म ने वनस्पति-रक्षण सलाहकार से आयात का परमिट प्राप्त नहीं किया था जैसा कि विनाशक कीट तथा कृमि अधिनियम के अन्तर्गत विमान द्वारा किये जाने वाले किसी भी आयात के लिए अपेक्षित था। इस सामग्री के साथ विनाशकारी कीट तथा कृमि अधिनियम के अनुसार आस्ट्रेलियन वनस्पति संगरोध प्राधिकारियों द्वारा जारी किया जाने वाला पौधों के स्वस्थ होने सम्बन्धी प्रमाण-पत्र भी नहीं था।

(ख) जड़दार कलमों की विस्तृत जांच करने पर यह पाया गया कि इस सामग्री में नेमाटोजे तथा मूल वियलन सम्बन्धी रोग जनक कृमि

थे। इस सामग्री को निर्मुक्त करने से हमारी कृषि को क्षति पहुंचती, अतः इस सामग्री को नष्ट कर दिया गया था।

(ग) तथा (घ) यह आयात सक्षम प्राधिकारी द्वारा जारी किये गये वैध आयात लाइसेंस के अन्तर्गत किया गया था। चूंकि यह आयात वैध आयात लाइसेंस के अन्तर्गत किया गया था, अतः हाप पौधों की तस्करी में सहायता देने के लिये किसी अधिकारी को जिम्मेदार ठहराने का प्रश्न ही नहीं उठता। पौधों के स्वस्थ होने सम्बन्धी प्रमाण-पत्र तथा वनस्पति-रक्षण सलाहकार के आयात परमिट की आवश्यकता इस बात को सुनिश्चित करने के लिए निर्धारित की गई है कि आयातित पौध-सामग्री से देश में कोई विदेशी कृमि या रोग न आने पाए। भारत सरकार ने ऐसे कृमियों तथा रोगों को रोकने के लिये बन्दरगाहों तथा हवाई अड्डों पर पौध संगरोध सम्बन्धी सुविधाओं की व्यवस्था की है। तथापि, प्राप्त अनुभव के आधार पर सरकार का विनाशक कीट तथा कृमि अधिनियम, 1914 के उपबंधों का पुनरीक्षण करने का विचार है, ताकि इन्हें अधिक कड़ा और व्यापक बनाया जा सके।

श्री नत्थी सिंह : क्या यह सही है कि ये पौधे जो लाये गये इनको तत्काल नष्ट न कर के—जो 1 लाख 20 हजार रुपये के माल का आयात इस तरह से नियमों की अवहेलना कर के किया गया था—इनको कुछ दिनों के लिये कोल्ड स्टोरेज में रखा गया और उनमें कृमि पैदा हो गये, उनमें राउंड वार्म पैदा हो गये और जब यह पता चला जब उनको नष्ट करने की कार्यवाही की गई है? तो क्या इस तरह के

ये राउंड वार्म छूट तो नहीं गये हैं और वह हमारी खेती को नुकसान तो नहीं पहुंचायेगें?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE: Sir, the reasons were very obvious because till we were satisfied that they were diseased plants, it would have been against our interest to destroy them. Foreign exchange was already spent for the import though there was some irregularity involved in it. On the basis of the report of a team of experts of the IARI who examined this, the decision was taken to destroy these plants.

श्री नत्थो सिंह: कोई रह तो नहीं गया है, इस बात की आपने ग्योरिटी कर ली है या नहीं? इतने दिनों तक, इतनी देर तक, रखने के बाद कहीं कोई बीमारी तो देश की खेती में नहीं फैलायेगे इसकी अह्तियात आपके डिपार्टमेंट ने कर ली है।

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE: In the cold storage they were put under seal and when they were removed a very important officer was himself personally present and those were destroyed in the presence of an officer.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: What is hop plant?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You may put a question.

SHRI SHYAMLAL GUPTA: Can you give us an assurance that in future you will not allow such plants to be imported again? Hop plants are getting germs and those germs or insects destroy agriculture. Will it not be bad to import hop plants in future?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE: Sir, all hop plants are not necessarily diseased. This particular consignment was found to be a diseased one and, therefore, had to be destroyed. Actually there is a provision under the quarantine rules that apart from the import licence, permit from the Plant Protection Officer is

required to import this by air. This particular party did not have this permit and he tried to import it from Australia and it was found out later on that there was a ban on the export of hop plants from Australia. We have addressed a letter to Australia but we have not heard from them. There was some irregularity but whatever material came obviously it was found to be diseased. Generally, for hop growing all plants are not necessarily diseased.

SHRI NABIN CHANDRA BURA GOHAIN: From the statement we do not find at what price M/s. United Krewaries Ltd. imported 12,000 root cuttings of hops from Australia. May I know from the hon. Minister whether he has made any enquiry as to in what specific production these hops are being utilised in Australia; whether he has made any enquiry if these hops can be cultivated in India and also can be utilised to our best advantage for earning foreign exchange by exports or internal use?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE: Sir, the reason is that first of all, annually we import hops worth Rs. 70 lakhs. That means, foreign exchange of Rs. 70 lakhs is spent annually. Therefore, some parties who wanted to take up production of it were supported by the DGTD and the Production Division of Agriculture Ministry. But as far as the price is concerned, the price, subject to correction was Rs. 1,20,000 for these 12,000 hops.

श्री भैरों सिंह शेखावत: क्या यह सही है कि जो यह हाप्स का आयात किया गया इसमें इन्टरनेशनल और डोमेस्टिक क्वारंटीन रूल्स का वाएलेशन हुआ है? जैसा माननीय मंत्री महोदय ने स्वीकार किया, इनके पास सैनिटरी सर्टिफिकेट नहीं था और यह भी मंत्री महोदय ने स्पष्ट रूप से नहीं कहा कि आस्ट्रेलिया ने कोई परमिशन दी है लेकिन समाचारपत्रों में जिस प्रकार का उल्लेख है उससे लगता है कि आस्ट्रेलिया से प्लान्ट चोरी किए गए हैं। ऐसी स्थिति में, जिस फर्म ने ये सारे प्लान्ट

आयात किए हैं, क्या उसके खिलाफ सरकार कोई लीगल ऐक्शन लेने का विचार कर रही है और यदि हां तो किस प्रकार ?

SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE: Sir, it goes to the credit of Quarantine Section that they checked up at the appropriate time and they stopped this from being taken to production because this may have caused some damage to agriculture.

As far as we think, party cannot be prosecuted. Unfortunately, in this particular case—though we are prepared to examine it afresh—the party had a valid import licence. The only difficulty is the import permit is required under the specific law of the Destructive Insects and Pests Act 1914. We examined the provisions of the law and we find that there is only one provision: either we confiscate or destroy. There is no other penalty provision. The Ministry now, on the basis of experience, has taken steps and we propose to examine the entire framework of the law. This is a very old law, as I said, of 1914. We propose to review it and bring it upto date. If necessary, on the basis of this case, perhaps, we will have to provide for a penalty provision for contravention of its provisions.

SHRI N. G. GORAY: I think there is a lacuna which is like this. Sir, the Minister has said that he had an import permit that is proper and it was valid. But in paragraph (a) of the statement that has been laid here, it is clearly mentioned: "However, the firm had not obtained an import permit from the Plant Protection Adviser as required under the Destructive Insects and Pests Act for any import to be effected by air. The material was not also accompanied by a phyto-sanitary Certificates issued by the Australian Plant Quarantine authorities. . ." So these two provisions were neglected and, therefore, I would like to know whether they do not suspect that there is some sort of a collusion, otherwise 12,000 roots is a big consignment and how could it be loaded into the aircraft and how was it allowed to be transported from Australia to here without these two certificates.

SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE: Obviously, there seems to be something which remains unexplained because, the party perhaps, may have got it loaded on the basis of import licence. There is a difference between import permit and import licence. Party had a valid import licence.

SHRI N. G. GORAY: Do we presume that he did not know that these two certificates were required?

SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE: He knew because he had applied to us in the past also and he had asked for an import permit. To the extent to which my information goes, there is a ban on export of hops from Australia. So under these circumstances, how the party got it exported from Australia is a suspicious circumstance but we have written to the Australian Government; unfortunately we have not heard from them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let us go to the next question.

*353. [Transferred to the 5th August. 1974.]

Budget Allocation for Anti-Malaria and Pest Control Department, Chandigarh

*354. SHRI O. P. TYAGI: Will the minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the annual budget of the Anti-Malaria and Pest Control Department, Chandigarh Administration, has been cut down from rupees 2.5 lacs to Rs. 20,000 while the price of pesticides and petrochemicals has gone up nearly four times; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that this reduction in budget has adversely affected the working of the department resulting in an unprecedented increase of mosquitoes and flies in the city, posing a threat to the health of the residents of the city?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING (DR. KARAN SINGH): (a) An overall provision of Rs. 5 lakhs has been made in the non-plan budget of the Sanitation and Pest Control Department for 1974-75 for contin-