

*463. [The questioners (Shri M. V. Bhadram and Shri Yella Reddy) were absent. For answers vide cols. infra.]

SUGAR PRODUCTION

*464. SHRI M. M. DHARIA :†

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI :

Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of sugar factories which have been working during the 1968-69 season upto 31st January, 1969 as compared to the number of sugar factories working during the period upto 31st January, 1968 during the 1967-68 season ;

(b) what was the production of sugar by the end of January, 1969 as compared to the production up to the 31st January, 1968 ; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to increase the production of sugar to reduce its price ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE) :
(a) 201 sugar factories had started crushing operations upto 31st January in 1968-69 as against 194 upto the corresponding date in 1967-68.

(b) 13.25 lakh tonnes during 1968-69, as compared to 12.92 lakh tonnes in 1967-68.

(c) With a view to increase the production of sugar, the Government has adopted a policy of partial decontrol as a result of which the production this year is estimated to be nearly 30 lakh tonnes as against 22.48 lakh tonnes last year.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA : Is the Government aware that the machinery required for the manufacture of sugar is being indigenously produced in this country, and that the farmers are prepared to have their own capital for the setting up of their own industry and that there is a vast foreign market for sugar ? Under the circumstances, may I know why the Government should not come forward and give free licensing for the erection of sugar

factories and also incentives for more production of sugar ?

SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE : It has already been explained in the past. There is no lack of installed capacity in this country so far as sugar production is concerned. There are many suggestions including that of the hon. Member and all these are under the consideration of the Government of India.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA : Is it not a fact that though at one time, about two months ago, the Cabinet took a decision to allow such factories to be erected in the country, it is because of some pressure here and there that that decision is not being gone through ? May I know from the hon. Minister whether he will reconsider this decision and give more and more incentives to the farmers for the production of sugar-cane and also for the production of sugar ?

SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE : May I make it very clear that in this regard decisions are taken on merit, not on pressure. Government does not do it. My Ministry will not take any decision through any pressure as such.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI : As just now stated by the Minister, the decision of partial decontrol was taken to increase sugar production and I remember that at that time the hon. Minister for Food and Agriculture had stated that the prices would come to a stabilised position but that hope has been belied. But may I know whether it is not a fact that during the last ten years the consumption of sugar is stagnant in the country ? When in the country and in the countryside everywhere, what you call the standard of living is increasing, why is sugar consumption stagnant and why are the poor people not getting sugar when they are interested in purchasing sugar ? What is obstructing the Government to increase the production ? The reply given by the Minister is all a camouflage in the sense that while the Government say that they are very much interested in the increased production of sugar, they are actually introducing certain measures whereby production is not increased. May I join my friend, Mr. Dharia, in requesting the Government that it should not be made a matter of prestige

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri M. M. Dharia.

and the Government should come out and delicense the sugar industry so that the sugar prices will come down. The consumers are now paying through the nose. Let the prices come down. There will be more sugar in the country. They will utilise it for better purposes and for the food industries also. They are suffering for lack of more sugar.

SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE : As I was explaining, the installed capacity in this country is about 35 lakh tonnes and despite this installed capacity of 35 lakh tonnes, because sugar-cane raw material was not sufficiently available in the country, we had a production of 21 lakh tonnes and 22.5 lakh tonnes during the last two years. So, the main bottleneck was the non-availability of adequate raw material and that was because of the fact that in 1966-67 we had a very severe drought in different parts of the country, especially in those parts where sugar-cane is grown. As a result, there was a setback. Government thereafter has taken a number of positive steps to see that the sugar-cane acreage increases and that necessary incentives are given to the farmers and that is why also the policy of partial decontrol was adopted. Even in regard to capacity and other matters, as to what should be the capacity which will be in a position to meet the requirements of the country, all these matters, as I have already submitted, are under consideration.

SHRI SITARAM JAIPURIA : Will the hon. Minister deny this fact that while the installed capacity in the sugar factories is sufficient, the production has not increased properly mainly because in many areas and especially in Maharashtra, the co-operative sugar factories have been established within a radius of five to ten miles of the other sugar mills already existing, with the ultimate result that sufficient availability of cane is not there though the installed capacity is increasing? In the circumstances, will he consider even now that the proposed setting up of co-operative sugar factories within a small radius of the sugar factories already existing there is not only stopped but also steps are taken in a manner so that the cane price is reduced substantially to enable them to function properly? (*Interruptions.*) It is a matter of opinion. He has to give the answer.

SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE : I am sorry for the ignorance of the hon. Member. In fact, the co-operative sugar factories in Maharashtra are operating at their highest operating capacity, their installed capacity. The use of the installed capacity of the co-operative sugar factories there is the highest in the country.

SHRI SITARAM JAIPURIA : At the cost of the existing factories.

SOME HON. MEMBERS : No, no.

SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE : May I tell the hon. Member that even the joint stock factories in Maharashtra this year are refusing cane from the growers?

SHRI SITARAM JAIPURIA : Not this year, I am talking of the previous year.

SHRI S. B. BOBDEY : When the installed capacity of the sugar factories has not been exhausted and when there are so many applications from co-operative societies for the establishment of sugar factories, will the hon. Minister take up the policy of free licensing to the new sugar factories where the installed capacity has not been exhausted?

SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE : As I have already submitted, all these are under the active consideration of the Government.

SHRI GODEY MURAHARI : I would like to know from the Government whether, in view of the fact that the mid-term poll is over and the capacity for giving money to the Congress Party is also limited as far as the sugar factories are concerned, the Government would consider it proper to again impose price control and distribute sugar through the ration shops and remove this anomaly of sugar being sold in the market at Rs. 5 or Rs. 6 per kilo and make it available at fair price shops at a cheaper price?

SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE : Sir, the only way whereby sugar can be available to the consumer at a cheaper rate is to increase the production. Government have taken all the necessary, possible steps to increase production. And this year, as I have already mentioned, the production is likely to go up to 30 lakh tonnes, and the prices

of sugar are expected to stabilise at a much lower level.

SHRI G. R. PATIL : May I know from the hon. Minister whether Government have carried out any survey as regards the requirements of the people of this country, their consumption of sugar, during the next two years? Also may I ask whether, in view of the fact that there is less production of sugar and that the country requires more and more of sugar, the Government has sent any proposal to the Planning Commission for increasing the present capacity from 45 lakh tonnes to 50 lakh tonnes?

AN HON. MEMBER : Thirtyfive lakh tonnes.

SHRI ANNASAHAB SHINDE : In deciding this matter, we necessarily consult all the Government agencies including the Planning Commission.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : May I know from the hon. Minister if it is a fact that the yield of sugar in respect of sugar factories in the northern parts of the country has been abnormally low this year as compared to the factories lower down, by as much as 7 per cent or 10 per cent because of pyrella infection of the sugar-cane crop? If so, what steps have been taken by the Government to save the sugar-cane crop from that infection so that the next crop does not suffer from this type of infection and that the yield is increased as is hoped by the hon. Minister?

SHRI ANNASAHAB SHINDE : In certain parts, the sugar-cane crop was infected by pyrella and especially in Western U.P. And may I tell the hon. Member that my Ministry took the initiative to see that necessary plant protection measures were taken in time? But it is ultimately the State Government which is to take steps and we are helping all the State Governments so that wherever sugarcane is affected by the pyrella or by any pest etc. necessary steps should be taken to control it. Financial assistance is extended to the State Government so that cane crop is protected.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA : May I know, Sir, if the Ministry will issue at least some licences to areas particularly in Northern India where no licences have been issued for the last ten or

twelve years? I know, for example, in U.P., which is still the largest producer of sugar, no licences have been issued for factories for the last eleven years.

SHRI ANNASAHAB SHINDE : Any application on merits from Northern India or from any part of the country would be favourably considered by the Government.

SHRI N. SRI RAMA REDDY : Sir, I have not received a reply to my question whether this Ministry is prepared to recommend to the licensing authority, which is supposed to be attached to the Industries Department, that delicensing is necessary because all the equipment is manufactured in India. There is absolutely no foreign exchange involved in these things. So delicensing probably will solve all the problems and headaches of this Ministry at the Centre. That is one thing.

Secondly, Sir, if they are not prepared to delicense would the hon'ble Minister please tell us how many applications for licences from the co-operative sector or others are pending from the Mysore State? The complaint from the Mysore State is that their applications have not received due consideration from the Ministry here.

SHRI ANNASAHAB SHINDE : First, at the outset, may I assure the hon'ble Member that as far as applications from Mysore are concerned, we shall give them the highest consideration; there should not be any apprehension in the mind of the hon'ble Member or the Mysore Government.

In regard to delicensing, I think it is not so easy to make a broad statement that simply because foreign exchange is not involved we should delicense. There are many issues involved in this, and if any such decision is to be taken the Government will have to consider many other issues such as repercussions in future etc.

श्री राम सहाय : क्या मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह जान सकूंगा कि जो शुगर मिलजोनर्स को फ्री बेचने की इजाजत दी जाती है, उसके ऊपर वह कितना प्राफिट कमाते हैं, इसकी आपने कोई जांच की है और क्या वह प्राफिट इतना बहुत अधिक नहीं होता है, जिससे कि गन्ने की कीमतों को और ज्यादा बढ़ाया जा सके।

SHRI ANNASAHAB SHINDE : Sir, I seek your protection because hon'ble Members are putting questions on everything connected with the sugar industry. This question is a little more specific. But, Sir, if you want me to answer it I am prepared to do so. But this is an unending thing.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Next question.

CASES REFERRED TO PRESS COUNCIL OF INDIA

*465. **SHRI ARJUN ARORA :**†

SHRI GULAM NABI UNTOO :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of cases referred to and decided by the Press Council of India ;

(b) the number of cases relating to (i) obscenity, (ii) spread of communalism, (iii) anti-national publications, and (iv) bad taste, which were referred to the Press Council ; and

(c) whether the Press Council made any recommendations for action by the Government in any of the cases referred to it ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL) :
(a) The Press Council have so far received 75 cases out of which 62 cases have been disposed of by them.

(b) (i) Obscenity.	2
(ii) Spread of communalism	21
(iii) Anti-national publications.	Nil
(iv) Bad taste	21

(c) There is no provision in the Press Council Act, 1965, requiring the Press Council to make recommendations or to refer its decisions to Government.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Arjun Arora.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA : Sir, the Press Council, of course, cannot take criminal action. May I know, Sir, what action has been taken in these 62 cases? How many complaints have been found genuine and in how many cases the people have been warned and in how many cases people have been given certain advices? Will the Minister throw some light on that because merely saying that 62 cases have been disposed of does not reveal much?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : Sir, so far as the cases are concerned, the Council has decided from case to case. In some cases only censure has been administered. In other cases, particularly of a communal nature, some State Governments have initiated action. But as the hon'ble Member will appreciate, the Government of India is not supposed to take any action on the cases. But now on the basis of the recommendations of the M.Ps. Committee they are thinking; if there is censure more than once we might initiate action.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA : May I know, Sir, which are the papers whom the Press Council has found guilty of spreading communal hatred and whose cases have been taken up by the State Governments?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : Sir, it will be difficult for me to say it here because, I think, the Press Council should publish the information rather than my giving it.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA : Sir, the Press Council does not come to Parliament. He has information, Sir. He should be able to give that information. At least the names of the papers which have been found guilty of spreading communal hatred should be known to this House and the country.

AN HON'BLE MEMBER : You might say you require notice.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA : No. He has information.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : I would ask the Member to give notice.

SHRI BANKA BEHARY DAS : May I know from the hon'ble Minister a few things? Here he has told us that 21 cases have been referred to the Press Council. As far as the spread