

negligible? Will he be able to rectify this situation and allot more time to South Indian music than what is given to western music?

SHRI DHARAM BIR SINHA: How do you expect me to reply to that?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question relates to Bengali music and therefore it is not necessary to reply to it.

†**National Cooperative Development Corporation's Scheme to set up an equitable distribution system**

*516. **SHRI HARASH DEO MALAVIYA:** ‡

SHRI SAWAISINGH SISODIA:
SHRI SARDAR AMJAD ALI:

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

(a) whether the National Cooperative Development Corporation has launched a scheme for setting up an equitable distribution system for essential consumer articles in rural areas; and

(b) if so, what are the main features of the scheme and its financial implications?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI A. C. GEORGE):

(a) Yes, Sir,

(b) A statement indicating salient features of the scheme is laid on the Table of the House. During the years 1975-76 and 1976-77, a total financial assistance of approximately Rs. 200 lakhs is proposed to be provided by the Corporation for the implementation of this scheme. Approximately Rs. 78 lakhs has been sanctioned so far to several States.

†Transferred from the 24th March, 1976. (previously numbered as Starred Question No. 336).

‡The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Harsh Deo Malaviya.

Statement

National Cooperative Development Corporation Sponsored Scheme for Assistance for Distribution of Consumer Articles in Rural Areas

In view of the recent developments and the guidelines given under the '20-Point Programme of Economic Development', the need for developing a system of cooperative rural supplies has become urgent. The Fifth Plan Working Group on Cooperation had also recommended that efforts should be concentrated on increasing the coverage of rural areas, strengthening of marketing societies for increasing consumer business and also for encouraging a large number of agricultural service societies to open fair price shops/retail shops for distribution of essential consumer goods.

In order, to give impetus to the programme, the NCDC has formulated a Scheme of assistance for the purpose of augmenting the rural consumer movement through selected primary marketing societies and rural service cooperatives.

The main objectives of the scheme are:—

To encourage and assist in the development of rural consumer trade through the existing cooperative structure at the primary as well as intermediate stage so as to increase the total cooperative consumer business in rural areas to Rs. 600 Crores by the country as a whole in the last year of the Fifth Five year Plan to build up an effective and regular channel of supplies of consumer articles in the rural areas.

Development is envisaged on project lines each project consisting of 20 to 25 primary service societies linked up for the purpose of supplies either with the primary marketing society or with the wholesale consumer store or with a branch of the State Cooperative Consumer Federation, depending upon the particular situation in

the relevant areas. While selecting the project areas, preference may be given to those where consumer activity at present is only marginal. Areas where the co-operatives are already doing well in respect of consumer business may not be taken up in the first phase.

Selection may be made on the merits of each case, on the basis of the general health of the societies, their existing managerial capability and their potential to undertake/expand their consumer business. Societies located in tribal, hilly and other under-developed areas and deficit regions would be given preference at the time of selection.

For the implementation of the Scheme, assistance would be provided by the NCDC during the years 1975-76 and 1976-77 on the following lines:—

(i) Margin money assistance in the form of addition share capital will be given to enable the concerned society to raise adequate bank finance. Though the amount of assistance will vary from project to project depending upon the projected programme and potential for growth, estimated average assistance may be Rs. 50,000 per society.

(ii) If, while framing the project, it is considered necessary for the secondary society to have its own transport arrangement, for ensuring prompt supplies, NCDC may give an assistance in the shape of loan-cum-subsidy (in the ratio of 75 : 25) for purchase of a tempo at an estimated cost of Rs. 24,000 per tempo.

(iii) In case the secondary society is a primary marketing cooperative and proposes to set up a retail outlet also at the mandi level, mostly for the benefit of the visiting rural population, a loan-cum-subsidy (in the ratio of 75 : 25) may be given for furniture, fixtures and fittings @Rs. 12,000 per society.

For primary service societies, the State Governments are expected to strengthen their financial base sufficiently so as to enable them to take up retail trade in essential consumer articles in rural areas. For this purpose sufficient assistance is available out of the Long Term Operations Fund from the Reserve Bank of India and should be availed of. However, if a primary service society is found in need of a semi-modern retail shop, NCDC may give assistance for furniture and fixtures in the shape of loan-cum-subsidy (in the ratio of 75 : 25), the average cost per society not exceeding Rs. 5,000. The primary societies may also avail of NCDC's assistance for construction of godowns under its normal programme of assistance for rural godowns.

Normally, a primary service society in the project area should strive to achieve a business of about Rs. 50,000 per annum in distribution of essential consumer articles. The secondary society in the project, should, on this basis, have an annual business turnover of Rs. 7.5 lakhs approximately. This should be the minimum turnover, which the primary service societies and marketing co-operatives should strive to achieve and efforts should be made for exemption of business in due course.

Assortment of articles to be supplied from the retail shops in the villages will have to be selected carefully, taking into consideration the consumption habits in the area. Stocking of slow moving articles and luxury items may be avoided. Mainly essential items such as cloth, sugar, vanaspati, tea, salt, matches, kerosene oil, edible oils, food stuff (in deficit areas) pulses cycle tyres and tubes, dry battery cells, paper and stationery for students, etc., will form the nucleus of the assortment. The success of the scheme will obviously depend upon the regular flow or supplies to the retail depots. The supply of a few consumer items is at present controlled in the state by various Departments/Institutions like the State Civil Supplies Department/State Food/Civil Supplies/Essential

Commodities Corporations, State level Co-operative Federations, and some other organisations. Since availability of supplies on a regular basis will be *sine-quo-non* for the success of the Scheme, the concerned Supply Organisations will have to be involved in the scheme and their whole hearted support to the selected co-operatives in respect of regular supply of consumer articles is to be assured before NCDC sanctions any project under the scheme.

At places, where fair price shops have also been opened, such shops may be handed over to the selected societies for operation.

Normally, the pattern indicated above will be kept in view at the time of project formulation. However, to suit the local situation, assistance outside the pattern mentioned above can be considered by the NCDC on the merits of each case.

The NCDC would sanction financial assistance under the scheme to State Governments who will pass on the same to the selected societies.

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA: It is a very comprehensive statement laid on the Table of the House, but rather very general. It says many things, but in fact says nothing. We are interested to know which are the areas selected for the enforcement of this scheme. For example, I would like to know whether in Bundelkhand area in U.P., Hamirpur, Jhansi, Jalaun, Lalitpur and Banda districts have been covered by this scheme. Similarly there are other parts in the country which are backward and arid. Is it proposed to cover these areas, particularly, those areas with tribal population?

SHRI A. C. GEORGE: This scheme was launched only this January and within three months we were able to disburse Rs. 78 lakhs to eight States comprising of 1,398 villages. Sir, the honourable Member was kind enough to point out that

the scheme is very comprehensive. Basically, Sir, the intention is to spread the public distribution system over as many rural areas as possible. But the scheme specifically will have to be sponsored by the States. Within a short span of time, that is, within two or three months after launching this scheme, we have sanctioned 78 more projects and 74 more proposals are pending which we hope we would be able to clear within two months or so.

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA: Sir, how does the honourable Minister propose to ensure popular interest and participation in this scheme to ensure its success?

SHRI A. C. GEORGE: Sir, these schemes are to be implemented by the co-operatives which are, of course, economic institutions and, over and above that, we are insisting that these public distribution centres sponsored by the societies must have advisory councils the members of which are drawn from all walks of life.

SHRI SAWAISINGH SISODIA: Sir, this is a welcome and commendable and most-needed decision by the Government for the distribution of consumer goods of daily use to the rural areas through the primary marketing societies and village co-operative societies. But there are two important aspects for the successful implementation of the scheme which deserve the careful consideration of the Government. Firstly, Sir, from which source will these consumer goods, as envisaged in the written reply, be supplied at reasonable and cheaper prices to these societies and how will the supply be controlled? How will the supply organisation be involved in the whole scheme? Is the Government also considering that there should be an alternative public or co-operative organisation to manufacture these consumer goods? Secondly, Sir, at present, most of the fair price shops are owned by individuals. So, will these existing shops be transferred to the village co-operative societies or not and, if it is proposed to be done, how much time will it take to do this? I want these things to be clarified.

SHRI A. C. GEORGE : Sir, there are 1,55,000 primary societies functioning throughout the country and, at present, 51,000 societies have shown interest in this scheme. Our intention is to cover at least another 51,000 primary societies and generate interest in this and that is why we are offering margin money through which their turnover will increase and we are offering transportation facilities which will enable them to carry these consumer goods from the urban areas to the rural areas and we are giving other infrastructural facilities and managerial expertise also and all these necessary ingredients for the betterment of this public distribution system have been included in this scheme and we are working very fast on this scheme and so, far, within two or three months, as I pointed out earlier, we have got proposals, 144 proposals, out of which 78 have already been cleared and the rest will be cleared within two or three months. If the States are kind enough to come forward and sponsor more schemes, we are prepared to go beyond the present financial limits and help them in a big way.

SHRIMATI PURABI MUKHOPADHYAY : Sir, in the North-Eastern Regions and in the hilly areas of Mizoram, Manipur, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh and on the northern border areas of Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh, the people have to live on the hill-tops and they are cut off and are not served by roads and sometimes articles are to be air-dropped. What is the Government proposing to do to see that these consumer goods reach them in time and also are available to them at cheaper prices because it becomes very costly for them to buy these things because of these difficulties ?

SHRI A. C. GEORGE : Sir, there is this particular problem of these hill areas and difficult terrains where, during certain seasons of the year, transportation of essential commodities is very difficult. We have formulated a scheme so that proper store-houses and warehouses are able to operate at convenient times and the goods

are transported over there and also the distribution will be facilitated round the year.

SHRI R. NARASIMHA REDDY : Sir, this scheme of public distribution is one of the most important items in the 20-point economic programme and we are, therefore, very glad that such a programme has been envisaged. Here it is said that each project would consist of 20 to 25 primary service societies and so on. I would like to know the area allotted to each project. Now, Sir, certain societies have been formed. May I know from the honourable Minister the percentage of the revenue villages which have been covered so far ?

SHRI A. C. GEORGE : Sir, the intention behind this scheme is to encourage urban societies or the wholesale societies to fan out and move into the suburban rural areas and there is no limitation of any kind and there is no geographical limit fixed for the operation of this scheme. If the societies are economically viable and if they can take up the responsibility, we do not put any limitation on their activity. The more they are prepared to open centres in the rural areas, the more we will be in a position to help them by way of giving transport facilities, margin money, subsidy money, infrastructure, etc.

SHRI R. NARASIMHA REDDY : Will it be desirable to have limited firkas ?

SHRI A. C. GEORGE : We have not given thought to the limitation of areas.

SHRI GULAB RAO PATIL : I think one of the main conditions for the success this scheme is the availability of supplies regularly. May I know from the hon. Minister as to what steps are being taken to involve the supply organisations so that the regular supply is made available, particularly essential goods under this scheme ?

SHRI A. C. GEORGE : During the past one year and especially after the declaration of emergency we have had 62 centres all over the country to monitor the availability and the price differential of each commodity. During the past one month the

information of the monitoring centres is that there is no question of any scarcity of any essential commodity.

श्री नत्थी सिंह : क्या मंत्री महादय को यह मालूम है कि जो सहकारी समितियाँ सप्लाई का काम करती हैं उनके सामने सबसे बड़ी दिक्कत यह है कि उनके जो कमीशन के रेट हैं वह बहुत कम हैं ? जैसे कौरोसीन आयल है इस सहकारी समितियाँ गाँवों में नहीं ले जाती हैं क्योंकि वहाँ कमीशन का डिफरेंस कम है । वहाँ लाने में उनका क्या खर्चा बैठता है उसको देखते हुए कमीशन तय करने की ओर क्या इसमें ध्यान दिया जाएगा ?

SHRI A. C. GEORGE : Sir, about the supply of kerosene, recently we have made some changes about the commission that has to be taken by the retail traders and a streamlined system has been evolved by which the supply in the rural areas will not in any way be adversely affected by the transportation cost.

*517. [The questioner (Shri Syed Ahmad Hashmi) was absent. For answer, vide cols. 39 infra.]

Re-examination of cases of persons arrested under MISA and Preventive Detention Act.

*518. **SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA :** †

SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to re-examine the cases of persons detained under MISA and Preventive Detention Act; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI K. BRAHMANANDA REDDI) :
(a) and (b) The cases of persons detained under MISA are reviewed, as provided in

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Bhupesh Gupta.

the Act itself, and detention orders are revoked where further detention is not considered necessary. Government consider it not in the interests of security in the context of emergency to disclose details in this regard.

The Preventive Detention Act, 1950, lapsed 31-12-69.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : Sir, we can only speak from our experience. Recently, I have brought to the notice of the Government the cases of detention of the members of our party. In Himachal Pradesh young comrade, youthful leader Anwar Ali Khan, in Haryana Mr. Harnam Singh and also recently in Gujarat two of our members have been detained without trial. However, the two have been detained almost from the beginning. Well, one has been from the beginning of the emergency and the other in last December. The latest arrests have taken place in Gujarat. We have written to the Governor and he has been good enough in saying that he would look into it. May I know what is the remedy? Emergency was declared for a certain specific purpose, to deal with certain types of offences. Well, I am not going into it. But how is it that such people are being arrested who had been fighting the rightist forces, whose *bona fides* are not in question, are not at all doubtful ? Why are they kept in detention for such a long time? When we make representation to the Home Ministry again and again stating our integrity and honour, why we are not listened to I should like to know. Do I take it that the report of a Sub-Inspector or an Inspector is more important ? Is he aware that sometimes local considerations, personal prejudice and other things are leading the authorities to the certain action and once they have taken the action, nothing seems to be moving to get the remedy ?

SHRI K. BRAHMANANDA REDDI :
In cases where people have been detained and representations have been received either from Members of Parliament or from the local people, the matter is looked into and consultation is made with the State Government concerned.