

are attempting in this direction and a beginning will be made in Punjab.

**Shri Yallamanda Reddy:** May I know whether the Government has made any assessment of the financial commitment in this regard and, if so, what is the amount?

**Shri S. K. Patil:** So far as this question is concerned, it is only to be started in Punjab. Half the administrative expenses will be shared by us. Actually, the insurance money is a matter which is a very difficult thing and no blind commitment could be accepted.

**Shri Inder J. Malhotra:** May I know what steps the Central Government have taken to collect the necessary statistics required for implementation of this scheme?

**Shri S. K. Patil:** Those statistics are being collected wherever the scheme is in progress. For instance, we have been asking Japan to send some experts to come here and help us in order to do that. There is a greater necessity for this in this country, in India, because, as I said, in any developmental scheme of agriculture, without crop insurance we cannot make much progress.

**Some Hon. Members rose—**

**Mr. Speaker:** I find several eminent persons standing up and trying to ask supplementaries. Nearly in every question, we find the names of eight, 15 or even 20 hon. Members who have tabled the question. So, it becomes difficult for me to go outside it. Though I would try to call every Member who has tabled the question, to put a supplementary,—it is open to the whole House to know the answers—if it is not possible for me to call all those that have given notice of the question, they will excuse me if I am not calling all of them.

**Shri Tyagi:** In cases where the number of Members is too large, the other Members cannot get the benefit of any supplementaries.

**Mr. Speaker:** I have not ruled that out, that I would not allow the opportunity to other Members. I would like to say that in England at least it is not considered good form to take out the questions of others and try to put supplementaries. We have not followed that practice. We make it open to all here, but a decision was taken earlier that we should try to cover more question. Here, every question is jointly tabled by ten or more Members sometimes.

**Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad:** It is in your discretion. You have been allowing supplementary questions on only two questions for fifteen minutes. It is our privilege to stand for chance and it is for you to disallow. That is all we want.

**Shri D. C. Sharma:** You can please tell us what good form is, here!

**Mr. Speaker:** There were so many locusts and therefore I had allowed several supplementaries! Next question.

#### Foodgrain Prices

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- \*58. {
- Shri S. M. Banerjee:
  - Shri Subodh Hansda:
  - Shri S. C. Samanta:
  - Shri B. K. Das:
  - Shri M. L. Dwivedi:
  - Shri Surendranath Dwivedi:
  - Shri Sadhu Ram:
  - Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:

Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is much difference in the wholesale prices and retail prices of foodgrains in the country;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to check any unjustifiable increase in the retail prices; and

(c) in particular the steps taken to arrest the rise in prices of foodgrains in U.P. and of rice in West Bengal and Orissa?

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Food and Agriculture**

(Shri Shinde): (a) The difference between the wholesale and retail prices of foodgrains constitutes the cost of handling and transport of foodgrains from the wholesale centres to the retail distribution centres and also the margin of profit of the retailer. If these factors are taken into account, the difference in the wholesale and retail prices of foodgrains at present does not on the whole appear to be excessive.

(b) and (c). It is through judicious distribution of foodgrains from Government stocks at the prescribed retail prices that the Government try to influence the open market retail prices and prevent them from rising unduly high in various States including U.P., West Bengal and Orissa.

**Shri S. M. Banerjee:** The hon. Parliamentary Secretary stated that the difference is not excessive. I want to know what is the actual difference between the wholesale price and the retail price in the case of wheat and rice in U.P., West Bengal and Orissa?

**Shri Shinde:** There is not any material difference between the prices which were prevailing last year and those prevailing this year. There is a slight variation in the prices which prevail in West Bengal and Orissa in respect of rice. But in respect of other grains, the prices are practically the same as those which prevailed last year.

**Shri S. M. Banerjee:** At least I expected that there will be a statement. The Minister does not say what is the difference.

**Mr. Speaker:** He said it is almost the same.

**Shri S. M. Banerjee:** It is not quite correct. In that case, he should have provided statistics. I want to know what is the actual difference in the wholesale and retail prices of wheat in U.P.

**The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Shri**

**A. M. Thomas):** I shall give certain figures regarding U.P. in which my friend is very much interested. In regard to farm average quality wheat in Lucknow, in June, the wholesale price was Rs. 14.39 and the retail price was Rs. 16. The difference was Rs. 1.61. In the previous month, the difference was Rs. 1.45. With regard to rice also, the difference comes to Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 2.

**Shri Subodh Hansda:** May I know whether Government have any machinery to check the rise in prices and if so, whether Government is aware that in West Bengal in the last three months, the price of rice has gone up very appreciably from Rs. 6 to Rs. 8 per maund?

**Shri A. M. Thomas:** The only way by which we can now control prices is by distribution of larger quantities through fair price shops. There are a large number of fair price shops in West Bengal and the overage off-take that was estimated in July was 12,000 tons. We have made available a quantity of 15,000 tons.

**Shri Surendranath Dwivedi:** The rise in price may not materially affect the Government, but it does affect the people. There is a rise in price of rice in Orissa in the last few months. I want to know what steps have actually been taken to curb this rise in the price of rice.

**Shri A. M. Thomas:** With regard to Orissa, the State Government have got stocks which they have locally procured. We are also supplying from central stocks. Recently we have made available 3,000 tons to the Orissa Government to be moved on high priority basis from Calcutta, so that it will relieve the difficulties of Orissa to some extent.

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:** May I know whether Government has a regular method of checking on the retail prices in the villages in various seasons and find out what is the actual difference between the retail prices prevailing in the villages and in big cities at the time of harvest

and at later dates? Is there any regular machinery by which Government finds this out?

**Shri A. M. Thomas:** Yes. With regard to the prevailing wholesale prices, we get daily reports from the various State Governments. Besides, the Economic and Statistical Directorate has got in its possession various reports regarding retail price. It was from these reports that I mentioned the figures and the difference.

**Shri Tyagi:** Do Government propose taking any effective steps to guarantee that the prices of foodgrains in U.P. do not rise further on account of the proposal of the U.P. Government to raise the land revenue by at least 50 per cent or so? Will that element be allowed to go into the price of foodgrains or would Government think of some plan to check that?

**Shri A. M. Thomas:** Whether the increase in land revenue would have any perceptible impact on the price level is a larger question. But, as far as the present state of affairs is concerned, with regard to Uttar Pradesh, I may submit, the prices are prevailing at a reasonable level and there is no room for any anxiety on that account.

**श्री म० ला० द्विवेदी :** क्या मन्त्री महोदय को मालूम है कि उत्तर प्रदेश के कुछ पिछड़े हुए इलाकों जैसे बुंदेलखण्ड के गांवों में बारह और तेरह रुपये मन के हिसाब से गेहूं बिक रहा है जबकि यहां बीस और बाईस रुपये मन बिक रहा है, यानी दामों में दूने का फर्क है ? यदि हां तो मन्त्रालय क्या कर रहा है कि इन दामों में इतना फर्क न हो और भ्रगले वर्ष से तो कम से कम ये ठीक हो जायें ?

**Shri A. M. Thomas:** My information is that as far as . . .

**Shri M. L. Dwivedi:** I am giving you the correct information.

**Shri A. M. Thomas:** As far as the price of wheat is concerned, it is prevailing at a very reasonable level in all the centres in India.

**श्री म० ला० द्विवेदी :** वहां पर बारह रुपये मन बिक रहा है और यहां पर बाईस रुपये मन बिकता है, यह रीजनेबल कैसे हुआ ?

**The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri S. K. Patil):** This House knows that the minimum price of wheat guaranteed by the Government of India is Rs. 13. If anybody is selling for Rs. 12, he has to thank himself.

**Shri Priya Gupta:** If somebody is selling above that price?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, order. Without being identified hon. Members should not begin to put questions.

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:** May I know what the Government of India has done regarding the recommendations of the Asoka Mehta Committee about the stabilisation of prices of foodgrains? May I know whether the Government of India have considered that report and whether they are prepared to lay on the Table of the House a statement showing what recommendations they have accepted and those that they have not accepted?

**Shri S. K. Patil:** The most practical thing, Sir, is to have more food. We have food just now. Therefore, we need not go about with stabilisation of prices. We release more. We have got abundant stocks with us. There is no difficulty except perhaps sometimes, owing to the bottle-necks in railways and other things, a little time-lag is there. That is a different matter. Therefore, there is no need now.

#### Air Passages to U.K.

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- \*54. { **Shri P. K. Deo:**  
 { **Shri Narendra Singh Mahida:**  
 { **Shri Bishanchander Seth:**  
 { **Shri Remeshwar Tantia:**

Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether the U.K. Immigration Bill created a great rush in the booking of air passages for going to N.K.;