

**Mr. Speaker:** All that is being done is being done.

**Shri Ferose Gandhi:** For the last ten years, with regard to the Delhi-Madras route, the same answer is being given. May I request the Ministry to request the Railway Board to find some new answer or explanation?

**The Minister of Railways (Shri Jagjivan Ram):** I do not think the G. T. Express has been running late for the last ten years.

**Shri Ferose Gandhi:** The hon. Minister has not been the Railway Minister for the last ten years. For 20 days in the month, probably it is not coming in time.

**Shri Thirumala Rao:** In view of the fact that people coming from the south for official and other public purposes are greatly inconvenienced on account of the systematic late running of trains that connect the south and Delhi, will the hon. Minister look into this matter and see that some serious steps are taken to see that the trains run according to time, especially the G. T. Express?

**Shri Shah Nawaz Khan:** We fully appreciate the inconvenience that is caused to the hon. Members. But I would like to point out, as Members are aware, that a lot of line capacity works are going on. In some places the track is being doubled and in some places, the track is being strengthened. So, on account of the restrictions that have been imposed, this inconvenience is caused.

**Shrimati Parvathi Krishnan:** On which portions of the Southern Railway is the track being doubled?

**Mr. Speaker:** List of all those tracks cannot be given off-hand; the hon. Member will put down a separate question.

**Shri Tangamani:** In view of the fact that the four express trains running in the metre gauge from Egmore have been running late particularly during the month of June, will Government

take special measures to see to the punctual running of these trains?

**Shri Jagjivan Ram:** I shall look into that matter. June is a difficult month; I am not quite sure about that, but in some places there is scarcity of water and that also affects the running of trains. I will look into that question.

#### Food Position in Manipur

\*425. **Shri L. Achaw Singh:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in the tribal villages of Talyang and in Hmar areas in the Churachandpur Sub-Division of Manipur people are experiencing great scarcity of foodstuffs;

(b) whether these tribal people made any representation for supply of foodstuffs at subsidised rates; and

(c) whether any action has been taken by the Manipur Administration to relieve the food scarcity?

**The Minister of Co-operation (Dr. P. S. Deshmakh):** (a) and (b). Petitions were received from a few villages in Churachandpur Sub-Division referring to low yield of last harvest and local scarcity of foodgrains and requesting free supply of foodgrains. On enquiry by the Manipur Administration it has been found that rice is available in villages in this sub-division at Rs. 10/- per maund.

(c) Villagers have been informed by the Manipur Administration that if they are unable to obtain supplies the Sub-Divisional Officers would assist them to get supplies at Churachandpur at Rs. 10/- per maund.

**Shri L. Achaw Singh:** In view of the fact that most of the agricultural crops in the hills of Manipur have failed due to the late arrival of monsoon this year and also in view of the absence of irrigation facilities there, may I know what steps have been taken by the Government to relieve the food scarcity there during the coming months? May I also know whether,

in view of the poor communications in that area, Government will build up some stock of rice and other food-grains in some selected places?

**Dr. P. S. Deshmukh:** I find from the information I have that adequate supplies have been sent. Manipur, as a matter of fact, is a surplus State. Still, we know the difficulties and so far as the Central Government is concerned, we are giving the necessary help.

**Shri L. Achaw Singh:** Will Government build food stocks in that area?

**Dr. P. S. Deshmukh:** I have not followed the question.

**Mr. Speaker:** Will the hon. Member repeat the question?

**Shri Hem Barua:** In view of the fact that the hill areas are not connected with plain areas by proper communications, it is difficult to get supplies from those areas. So, do Government propose to build food-stocks there in order to meet the scarcity?

**The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. P. Jain):** Manipur is a surplus area. In fact, exports from Manipur are now banned except with permits and the Chief Commissioner has been taking every care to see that exports from that area are stopped.

#### Price of Foodgrains

\*426. **Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to fix the minimum price of foodgrains in the near future; and

(b) if so, whether they are to be fixed on zonal or State basis?

**The Minister of Co-operation (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh):** (a) and (b). A copy of the Press note issued by the Government on 14-6-1957 is placed on the Table of Lok Sabha. [See Appendix II, annexure No. 14.]

**Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha:** In the statement, it has been said that the Government is always prepared to control the food prices going down below a certain level. May I know whether any economic level of food prices in the country has been worked out at all and if so, what is it?

**The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. P. Jain):** The assurance itself says that at the moment the prices are rather on the high side. If at any time, they fall below, necessary steps will be considered.

**Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha:** In order to fix the minimum price of foodgrains, a certain amount of control is required; it is involved in the basic factor of fixing the price. May I know how many State Governments have favoured this putting of some sort of control in order to fix the minimum price?

**Shri A. P. Jain:** It is rather not a correct premise that maintenance of the price at a certain level necessarily involves control. If the prices go down, we will go into the market and purchase the foodgrains.

**Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha:** In order to balance the food prices in the country, the Government have now resorted to zonal restrictions. For example, there has been an Andhra zone. May I know whether the Government are finding this difficulty that the surplus zones are not able to send their foodgrains to the deficit areas? What is the reason for foodgrains not moving the way that Government desire?

**Shri A. P. Jain:** The question put by the hon. lady Member is not within the ambit of the main question. The main question is, prices are going down and what Government is going to do about it; whether it is going to fix any price. This question relates to the movement of stocks from Andhra to other places. If you want, I can answer it, but it is not related to the main question.