

Mr. Speaker: We are straying away from the question.

Shri Raj Bahadur: That is a laudable object which we shall keep in view.

चीनी का उत्पादन

*७१४. श्री विभूति मिश्र : क्या साक्ष्य तथा कृषी मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि १९५६-५७ के गन्ना पेरने के मौसम में मजदूरों तथा मिल मालिकों में झगड़ों के कारण कुछ चीनी मिलों में धीरे काम करों की नीति के फलस्वरूप चीनी का उत्पादन कम हुआ है ;

(ख) यदि हां, तो वे मिलें कौन-कौन सी है ; और

(ग) क्या सरकार ने इन झगड़ों को तय करने के लिये कोई उपाय सोचे है ?

सङ्कार मंत्री (डा० पं० शा० बेशमुख) :

(क) जी नहीं ।

(ख) और (ग). प्रश्न नहीं उठने ।

श्री विभूति मिश्र : मैं पूछना चाहता हूँ कि क्या यह सही है कि चम्पारन की हरिनगर शहर मिल्स में बराबर 'गो स्लो' की पालिसी रही है और वहाँ प्रोडक्शन कम हुआ है ?

डा० पं० शा० बेशमुख : हमारे पास दो जगहों से ऐसी इतला आई है, लेकिन यहाँ से कोई ऐसी इतला नहीं आई ।

श्री विभूति मिश्र : मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या फूड ऐंड ऐग्रिकल्चर मंत्रालय की तरफ से कोई जांच पड़ताल हुई है कि किस मिल में 'गो स्लो' की नीति बरती जा रही है और प्रोडक्शन कम हो रहा है ।

साक्ष्य तथा कृषी मंत्री (श्री अ० प्र० जैन) : हमारे पास प्राकड़े आते हैं । हमारी

तरफ से कोई इन्स्पेक्शन नहीं होता । यह राज्य सरकारों का काम है ।

Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha: What are the reasons why the production of sugar in most of the mills in Bihar has gone down?

Shri A. P. Jain: It is not a fact that production from most of the mills has gone down. In certain mills it has suffered.

Rain of Fish at Ghaziabad

*715. {
Shri D. C. Sharma:
Shri Shree Narayan Das:
Shri Radha Raman:
Shri Mohan Swarup:
Pandit D. N. Tiwary:

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

(a) whether the reported rain of fish at Ghaziabad village near Delhi on or about the 15th September, 1957 has been brought to the notice of the meteorological experts of the Government of India;

(b) if so, whether the phenomenon has been examined; and

(c) the nature of the findings in this regard?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) Except for newspaper reports, the Meteorological Department of the Government of India has no information on the subject.

(b) and (c). No examination of the phenomenon was possible, as there is no meteorological observatory at or near the place where the rain of fish is reported to have fallen.

Shri D. C. Sharma: May I know if any attempt was made to check up these newspapers reports by the

Meteorological department and what was the nature of the check up?

Shri Raj Bahadur: The Fisheries Department in the U.P. is likely to receive a report from the District Magistrate of Meerut who is concerned with this area.

Mr. Speaker: This was on the 15th of September. Whatever happened there, does it require so much time to get reports even?

Shri Raj Bahadur: I think the newspaper report is of the 15th September.

Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha: Is it not a fact that such a phenomenon is very rare? It has happened. Has not this been examined by the Meteorological department?

Mr. Speaker: They have not got the materials. What is the examination?

The Deputy Minister of Agriculture (Shri M. V. Krishnappa): Except the Biblical story where fish and food came from the sky, there is no other case of fish coming down from the sky. When fish is carried by cyclone from one pond, it comes down

Mr. Speaker: What I would like to know is this. If it should have happened, it is an extraordinary phenomenon. There is some newspaper report. Whether it ought to have come here before Parliament or not is another matter. The persons in charge of the area should have gone there and verified the reports if the report appeared in a very important paper. What steps have been taken so far as that matter is concerned. It is one thing to say, we have found it is a myth. It is another thing to say we have no report. We are prepared to condemn it from here. How does it happen that no information is being given to the House?

The Minister of Transport and Communications (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri): Information was received. But, what we have come to know

from the Meteorological department is that they have not been able to find anything authentic so far in connection with that particular matter as to whether there was actually fish rain at Ghaziabad. They are unable to make any further investigation into the matter. It is true the U.P. Government is also making certain enquiries. But, we have not received any report from them so far. Our Meteorological department does not attach much importance to it because they feel that this phenomenon has happened at several other places in the country. It has happened many a time in Bengal. There is some explanation for that as the Deputy Minister of Food said just now about cyclones sucking fish and then the fish coming down with the rains. The department concerned does not attach much importance. As they are the experts, we cannot say anything further. Fortunately, all the questioners happen to be vegetarians. I do not think they need be so much interested in fish rain.

Mr. Speaker: Next question.

Some Hon. Members rose—

Mr. Speaker: All that the hon. Members want to hear, evidently, is this. Is that a fact? The people are there. It is not the concern of one paper reporter. There are a number of persons there. Whoever goes there can easily find out if there was really fish rain, though the fish may not appear on the soil today.

Shri Raj Bahadur: Much as we would like to study on the spot, the fact remains that we do not have a meteorological check post at Ghaziabad. We shall not have first hand information. Whatever information we will be able to collect now will be hearsay.

Mr. Speaker: Ten days' notice is given. It is not a Short Notice question. In ten days, can't the Government collect information if it was or was not a fact. Ghaziabad is not thousands of miles away.

Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri: If you so like, we can send a man from the department. But, it may not produce any result.

Mr. Speaker: Very well. Next question. It would not produce any result. What can be done.

Foodgrain Prices in Calcutta

*716. **Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether "direct action" movement was launched in Calcutta in the month of September, this year to protest against the increase in the prices of foodstuffs there;

(b) what has been the increase in the prices of foodstuffs in Calcutta in the months of August and September, 1957, over the prices prevailing during the corresponding months of 1956; and

(c) whether the prices are still going up?

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. M. Thomas):

(a) There was some agitation about rise in prices for 3 or 4 days in September, 1957.

(b) There was increase in the prices of some items of foodstuffs and decrease in others during August and September this year as compared to last year. The extent of increase varied from 3.1 per cent. to 38.7 per cent. The extent of decrease varied from 1.2 per cent. to 18.8 per cent.

(c) No, Sir. The prices are more or less steady.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know the efforts made by the Government to bring down the prices which have gone up?

Shri A. M. Thomas: The House knows that we have a number of fair price shops. In the Calcutta industrial area itself, there are as many as 3053 fair price shops. About 94 lakhs of people throughout West Bengal are now covered by identity

cards. We have also supplied substantial quantities of foodgrains to the fair price shops. It has been made clear on a previous occasion that about 85,000 tons of rice are being given to the State Government for the months of September, October, November and December. Adequate quantities of wheat are also being supplied to the State Government.

Shri E. Ramanathan Chettiar: What is the present level of prices in Calcutta compared to September?

Shri A. M. Thomas: In August-September, the prices in 1957 to which year the question relates, was 23.25 (in September) for coarse rice, whereas in 1956 it was 20.50. In August, 1956 the price of coarse rice was Rs. 20 and in August 1957 it was Rs. 24.25.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: May I know if the Government is aware that the amount of food given for distribution does not cover the number of cardholders for modified and for cheap rations?

Shri A. M. Thomas: Yes, it covers. We are now supplying at the rate of one seer of wheat and one seer of rice per adult per week.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: May I know whether it has been brought to the notice of Government that many of the cardholders in the rural as well as the city areas are not able to buy because there is no stock in the shops?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. P. Jain): We have not had any such reports.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know the factors which led to the increase in price, and to what extent was the drought responsible for increase in price in Calcutta?

Shri A. P. Jain: Of course, the reports of the drought have been responsible to some extent for the increase in price, but it is rather difficult to determine to what extent drought has affected the prices.