

Shri Tangamani: Out of the 38 persons who were not injured, how many were through passengers to Madras and what arrangements were made to get them the connecting plane at Nagpur?

Shri Humayun Kabir: There were 43 passengers, not 38. Only two of them received some injury.

Shri Joachim Alva: Recently, an Air Medical conference was held under the auspices of the Indian Air Force where the Medical Consultants were of the opinion that pilots going up a particular height were suffering from certain ailments which caused certain damages. May I know whether our pilots are checked under that kind of system and whether those effects are found?

Shri Humayun Kabir: Every effort is made to see that the pilots are in good health. There are periodical checks. But, this particular accident took place on the ground.

Shri Tangamani: We find in the statement it is stated that two out of 43 passengers sustained injury. What arrangement was made to transport these 41 to Nagpur and what special arrangement was made for the passengers bound for Madras?

Shri Humayun Kabir: I would ask for notice.

Mr. Speaker: Next question.

Shri Biren Roy: One question, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: No, Sir. I have passed on to another question.

Import of Rice from Burma

*1178. **Shri D. C. Sharma:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) the total quantity of rice imported in 1956-57 and 1957-58 from Burma;

(b) how much of this has been sold out so far; and

(c) the loss incurred by Government in respect of the rice already sold?

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. M. Thomas): (a) In 1956-57, 414.1 thousand tons.

In 1957-58 upto the end of February, 1958, 413.2 thousand tons.

(b) About 685 thousand tons.

(c) About Rs. 8 crores.

Shri D. C. Sharma: May I know if the Government has any plan to avoid this loss or curtail this loss and what that plan is?

Shri A. M. Thomas: We are getting Burma rice at the following rates: for 1957 it was £33; for 1958 it will be £32; in 1956, it was £34. We are selling at a subsidised rate of Rs. 16 a maund, so that there will be necessarily some difference.

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. F. Jain): The object of this operation is to keep down the price of rice in the internal market. We cannot control the price of rice in the world market. Therefore, we have to import at a higher price. If we do anything merely to save the subsidy, it will defeat the very object of the scheme.

Shri Tyagi: May I know if this rice is being imported just to make good the demand in India or it is being received from Burma in lieu of the repayment of instalment of our loan to Burma?

Shri A. F. Jain: It was an agreement for 2 million tons of rice for import during the period of five years. It was purely to supplement the internal supply.

Shri Ranga: Is it not a fact that the price that we pay to Burma is the highest ruling in the world now?

Shri A. F. Jain: I think it is one of the lowest.

Shri Ranga: Lowest?

Shri Kasitwal: May I know which are the areas to which this rice is supplied?

Shri A. M. Thomas: Mainly Bombay and Calcutta.

Shri Viswanatha Reddy: May I know whether the price paid for the Burma rice is the negotiated price or the market price in Burma?

Shri A. M. Thomas: Negotiated price.

Shri Ramanathan Chettiar: Is it a fact that we are paying in sterling to Burma for this purchase?

Shri A. M. Thomas: Yes.

सेठ गोबिन्द दास : प्रभू जी ने यह कहा कि जो कीमत हम बर्मा के चावल की देते हैं वह संसार की नीची से नीची कीमत है, तो मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि अगर नीची से नीची कीमत है तो हमें नुकसान क्यों होता है ?

श्री त्यागी : हमारे से ऊंची है ।

श्री अ० प्र० जैन : मैंने यह जरूर कहा कि नीची कीमत है लेकिन हम उससे भी कम कीमत में बेच रहे हैं तो उससे नुकसान तो होगा ही ।

Shri Ranga: May we know the names of one or two other countries to which we are paying a higher price?

Shri A. P. Jain: For the time being, we are not buying from any other country.

Shri Ranga: Therefore, it is the lowest?

Mr. Speaker: That does not necessarily follow: because everything is higher, they are purchasing only from Burma.

Shri Ranga: We are not purchasing from any other country, but only from Burma. Therefore, he says it is the lowest.

Mr. Speaker: This kind of reasoning does not seem to be sound. The hon. Minister just now said that the price they pay is the lowest. The hon. Member wanted to know if they have purchased from any other country so that he may know if they were paying a higher price. That is not the only way to ascertain: pay a higher price and get to know the higher price. You may know that the prices there are ruling higher and they are purchased at a lower price. The hon. Members need not be in a hurry to put the question. They may think out.

Shri Ranga: We have thought about it.

Mr. Speaker: If it had been thought about, this question would not have been put.

Shri P. R. Patel: As has been stated by the hon. Minister, if rice has been bought at the lowest price in Burma and it was the lowest price in the world, may I know why that price is not guaranteed to the farmers so as to have more local rice?

Mr. Speaker: Next question.

Fares and Freight rates for Hill Stations

*1179. **Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether representations have been made to Government for reducing the fare and freight rates of Hill Railways; and

(b) if so, whether Government have considered those representations and arrived at any decision?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Sahabnawaz Khan): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Inflation on some sections was abolished and on other sections reduced by 25% with effect from 15-9-57