

Shri S. K. Patil: The whole question will be the subject-matter of inquiry, and, therefore, we do not want to anticipate all that.

Shri Hem Barua: In view of the fact that this attitude displayed by the Bombay Steam Navigation Co threatening to close down their lines is only a part of a wider scheme exhibited as well by British steam navigation companies all over the country, plying their boats in Bihar or in Assam, may I know whether Government have undertaken to enquire into the assets and liabilities of these companies who threaten to close down their lines and ask for Government subsidy?

Shri S. K. Patil: This is a different question altogether. What is done in Assam is not on a par with what is done here. But we can give one assurance,—because I can easily see the anxiety of the House—that so far as the continuance of that service is concerned, Government will see to it that the service shall remain and shall continue.

Shri Raghunath Singh: That is enough.

Mr. Speaker: Now, we shall take up short notice question No. 7. **Shri Thanu Pillai:**

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. M. Thomas): I would suggest that S. N. Q. Nos. 7 and 8 may be taken together, because they are interlinked.

Mr. Speaker: Then, I shall ask the hon. Member, in whose name S. N. Q. No. 8 stands, also to read out the question, so that the answers may be given together.

Rise in Price of Paddy in Madras State

S.N.Q. No. 7. Shri Thanu Pillai: Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state—

(a) whether the price of paddy in Madras State has increased due to

unrestricted transport of paddy from Madras to Kerala in view of the higher price of paddy available in Kerala; and

(b) if so, what action do Government propose to take to check the free transport and rise in price of paddy?

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. M. Thomas): (a) and (b) No, the price of paddy has not risen. With a view to checking abnormal movement of paddy from Madras to Kerala the Government of India have accepted the suggestion of the Madras Government and have imposed a ban on the export of paddy from Madras to any place outside the State, except in head-loads or under permits granted by the State Government.

Procurement of Rice by Madras Government

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**S.N.Q. { Shri Narasimhan:
No. 8. { Shri Subbiah Ambalam.**

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

(a) whether Madras Government are facing serious difficulties in the matter of procurement of rice and have not reached the target;

(b) whether these difficulties have been brought to the notice of the Centre,

(c) the steps, if any, proposed to be taken in this regard, and

(d) what remedial measures have been suggested by the Madras Government?

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. M. Thomas): (a) to (d) The Government of Madras had represented that they were experiencing difficulties in procurement of rice due to—

(i) Abnormal movement of rice and paddy from Madras to Kerala; and

- (ii) Dispersal of paddy from Tanjore into the adjoining districts in Madras and eventually stocks going underground

To remedy the situation the Government of India have accepted the suggestion of the Madras Government and have imposed ban on the export of paddy—

- (i) from Madras to any place outside the State except in head-loads, or under a permit granted by the State Government, and
- (ii) from a place in Tanjore District to any place outside the District except under a permit issued by the Grain Purchase Officer concerned

It has also been agreed to fix maximum control prices for rice in Kerala, and the proposals of the Kerala Government are now under consideration

Shri Thanu Pillai: The hon Minister has said that there has been no price increase. May I know the controlled price fixed by Government and also the price at which paddy is available in the Madras State?

Shri A. M. Thomas. The controlled price fixed for Madras varies from Rs 15 50 to Rs 21 50, for various varieties of rice. There are different varieties. It will take too much of the time of the House to give all the details. With regard to the price prevailing in the open market there is not much difference. And I might bring it to the notice of the hon Member that in some places it varies from Rs 16 58 to Rs 18 46 for coarse grain.

Shri Thanu Pillai: May I know whether it is a fact that the unrestricted movement from the adjacent districts at least has contributed for a rise in prices in the local market, which the hon Minister says is not too much, but which according to our information,—because we are paying the prices and we know it—is 20 to 30 per cent more than the controlled price?

Shri A. M. Thomas: The main ground on which this ban has been imposed is that sufficient quantities were not made available to the mills for dehusking purposes. That was the reason why we resorted to this order, and the open market prices are declining now, and there is not considerable difference between the controlled price as fixed and the open market prices.

Shri Narasimhan: May I know when the prices actually started declining? May I also know whether or not the prices were continuously rising until recently and whether they started declining only recently?

Mr. Speaker: When the hon Member knows it why does he put a question?

Shri Narasimhan: I want to know correctly. These are only guesses.

Shri A. M. Thomas: It is not correct. With the prospects of a good *Tharu* crop the price of rice all over India has shown a decline.

Shri Narasimhan: I want to know when the decline came? I want to know whether the prices were high for a considerable time and have started declining only within a week or so.

Mr. Speaker: When was the ban imposed?

Shri A. M. Thomas: The ban was imposed, I think, from the first of this month.

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. P. Jain): It was introduced a few days ago.

Mr. Speaker: Therefore, the decline has been.....

Shri A. P. Jain: There was a decline even before but it had not been precipitate

Shri Thanu Pillai: May I know whether the prices were fixed by the Central Government or by the State Governments? If it is fixed by the Central Government, why have the Central Government not fixed the price for Kerala when they have fixed the prices for Madras

Shri A. P. Jain: The prices were fixed by the Central Government in consultation with the State Governments. Originally, no control prices were fixed for Kerala. But there was a meeting of the Food Minister of the Southern Zone, I believe, on the 7th of February, when this principle was accepted, and the Kerala Government was requested to indicate their prices. The prices have been received and are under examination.

Shri V. Eacharan: May I know what will happen to the mill-owners located in the adjacent districts of Madras State who were getting paddy from Tanjore and other places, if the ban is imposed?

Shri A. P. Jain: To the extent of normal limits it will be allowed but under permits.

Shri Subbiah Ambalam: The hon. Minister said that there is no abnormal increase in prices of paddy or rice in Kerala. May I know whether the Madras Government has suggested a remedial measure that in order to have a fair price in all the Southern Zone States, a fair price must be fixed so that the movement of paddy and rice may be normal?

Shri A. P. Jain: That question has already been answered. It has been decided that there will be control price for Kerala and the Kerala Government have sent the proposals.

Shri Vasudevan Nair: It is said that there is unrestricted transport of rice from Madras State to Kerala. May I

know the quantity of rice transported to Kerala during this period and also the corresponding period of last year?

Shri A. M. Thomas: We have got only the railway figures. Railway movements do not show any increase. But we have got information that by trucks and lorries large quantities were moved.

Shri Punnoose: Is it not a fact that Kerala had been the traditional market for Tanjore rice? Why is this ban now imposed especially when there is no abnormal price?

Shri A. M. Thomas: I have already answered that it is because the supplies of paddy to the mills in the Madras State were dwindling. That was the main reason why this ban was imposed.

Shri Punnoose: May I know whether Government have examined the question that the Madras Government is not offering an economic price to the producer and that is why rice is going underground?

Shri A. M. Thomas: That is not correct. The Central Government have fixed the prices in consultation with the State Governments and we think the prices are quite fair.

Shri Thanu Pillai: May I know whether the price for Kerala State has even now been fixed?

Shri A. P. Jain: The proposal has been received only during the last few days and it is being examined.

Shri Subbiah Ambalam: May I know whether the Madras Government have represented that all purchase of rice and paddy to Kerala should be done only through the Madras Government and not directly by dealers or by the Kerala State and that the Madras Government has assured the procurement of necessary quantities required by Kerala State through their own administration?

Shri A. P. Jain: The position of the Southern Zone has been stated that it is a free movement zone for rice. Of course, some restrictions have been placed on the movement of paddy.

Shri Thanu Pillai: In view of State trading that is being considered, will Government apply state trading between Madras and Kerala by the State Governments?

Shri A. P. Jain: When the scheme of State trading is ready, all these questions will come up

Shri Kodiyam: May I know whether the Kerala Government have made any representation regarding the imposition of a ban on the export of rice from Tanjore to Kerala and, if so, what is the nature of the representation and what is the reaction of the Central Government?

Shri A. M. Thomas: There is no ban on the export of rice from Madras to Kerala; the movement is unrestricted

Mr. Speaker: Any person who eats rice knows the difference between paddy and rice

Shri Narasimhan: Will Government give information as to whether they sought the opinions of the various State Governments concerned regarding the prices and when each State gave the information and also state the reason given by the Kerala Government for the delay?

Shri A. P. Jain: Before we fixed the prices, we consulted the State Governments and they were fixed after consulting them

Shri Smbbiah Ambalam: One more question, Sir

Mr. Speaker: I cannot allow any more question

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Building of Shallow Draft Ocean-going Ships

*872. **Shri Rajendra Singh:** Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to build special shallow draft ocean-going ships for coastal trading; and

(b) if so, whether any progress has been made in this respect?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (**Shri Raj Bahadur**): (a) There is no such specific proposal under consideration of Government at present.

(b) Does not arise

T.B. Clinics

*874. { **Shri Subodh Hansda:**
Shri Ajit Singh Sarhadi:

Will the Minister of Health be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that two hundred new tuberculosis clinics are proposed to be established during the remaining period of the Second Five Year Plan,

(b) if so the steps taken in the matter so far,

(c) whether the existing clinics have been upgraded and brought up to the standard, and

(d) how many State Governments and individual persons and voluntary institutions have approached Government for help?

The Minister of Health (**Shri Karmarkar**): (a) to (d) A statement containing the required information is placed on the Table of the Lok Sabha

STATEMENT

(a) and (b) The target for the Second Five Year Plan is the establishment of 200 new T.B Clinics and