

Price of Foodgrains

Shri E. C. Majhi:
 Shri S. M. Banerjee:
 Shri Tangamani:
 Shri A. K. Gopalan:
 Shri Ram Krishan Gupta:
 Shri Shree Narayan Das:
 Shri Ajit Singh Sarhad:
 Shri D. C. Sharma:
 Shri Paralekar:
 *1014. Shri Bibhut Mishra:
 Shri Hem Raj:
 Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:
 Shri Mohan Swarup:
 Shri Pangarkar:
 Pandit J. P. Jyotishi:
 Sardar Iqbal Singh:
 Shri Padam Dev:
 Shri E. Madhusudan Rao:
 Shri Daljit Singh:

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

(a) the present market price of rice and wheat in various States as compared to the price prevailing on the 1st December, 1958 (State-wise);

(b) whether it is a fact that the price of foodgrains especially wheat rose very high in the month of January, 1959 in certain States;

(c) if so, the names of such States and the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken to stabilise the prices?

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. M. Thomas): (a) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha. [See Appendix III, annexure No. 48] showing the wholesale market prices of wheat and common rice in certain important centres as on 3rd March 1959 compared to the prices prevailing on 1st December, 1958.

(b) and (c). The prices of rice declined in almost all the States in January 1959, but the prices of other foodgrains, particularly rabi grains, appreciated owing to the shortfall in the production of rabi grains in 1957-

58 and the approach of the fag end of the crop season.

(d) The steps taken to stabilize the prices of foodgrains included distribution of large quantities of foodgrains from Government stocks through fair price shops, continuance of bank credit squeeze, imposition of zonal restrictions on movement, fixation of controlled prices in certain areas, restriction on purchases of wheat from internal markets by the roller flour mills, etc.

Shri E. C. Majhi: May I know whether the price fixed for rice is only for milled rice and not for hand-pounded rice?

Shri A. M. Thomas: I think it includes hand-pounded rice also

Shri D. C. Sharma: Is the Government aware of the gap which exists between the price of these commodities at Government shops and the price of these commodities which are sold in the free market and, if so, what steps are the Government going to take to bridge this gap?

Shri A. M. Thomas: We are selling at subsidized rates wheat and rice through the fair-price shops. We have also fixed the maximum controlled price in almost all the States. Of course there is some difference in certain areas between the market price and the controlled price, but in several places the difference is disappearing, and we are even getting rice and paddy at the maximum controlled prices on a voluntary basis.

श्री पद्म देव . इस विवरण को देखने से मालूम होता है कि जिन स्थानों में चालीस और साठ रुपया प्रतिमन के हिसाब से अनाज बिक रहा है, उनका इत्तम कोई जिक्र नहीं है जैसे हिमाचल का इलाका, कांगड़ा का इलाका और गढ़वाल का इलाका है। क्या मंत्री महोदय बतुलाने की कृपा करेंगे कि उन स्थानों के सम्बन्ध में भी सरकार कुछ विचार करती है कि वहाँ भी कीमतें कुछ कम होनी चाहिये ?

भाऊ लबा कुचि मंत्री (बी. ए. प्र. ० जैन) :
 ऐसी तो, हमको कोई खबर नहीं है कि साठ रुपये और चालीस रुपये मन वह विक रहा है। ये जो भाकड़े दिये गये हैं, ये तो राज्यों के हिसाब से दिये गये हैं। रहा यह कि हिमाचल को अभी तक हमने कितना घनाज भेजा है, उसके बारे में धानरेबल मंत्री मुझसे मिले थे और जितना उन्होंने बताया और जितने घनाज की बहा की एडमिनिस्ट्रेशन ने सिफारिश की, उतना घनाज तो हमने भेज दिया।

Shri Hem Barua: In spite of the prices being fixed, may I know whether the Government are aware of the fact that very often, and more often than not, buyers are forced to buy rice of inferior quality at the prices fixed for superfine quality and, if so, what steps have the Government taken to check this gamble in foodgrains?

Shri A. P. Jain: I cannot rule out the possibility of inferior quality rice being sold as superior kind of rice. Of course, the State Governments are trying to exercise inspection and also prosecute people who are doing it, but, nonetheless food operations are so widespread that it may not be always possible to eliminate this kind of mischief.

Shri Ram Krishan Gupta: From the statement I find that the price of wheat in Punjab is still the highest. In view of this fact, may I know what special steps Government propose to take to lower the prices there?

Shri A. M. Thomas: It is not correct to say that the price of wheat in Punjab is the highest. In Punjab wheat is being sold at Rs. 21.25 and Rs. 23.12 for the superior variety. Regarding the steps taken, large supplies of wheat have been made to Punjab, although Punjab is mainly a wheat-producing area, for distribution through the fair price shops.

Shri Jyotishi: May I know what steps Government propose to take in order that the cultivators may get a fair price for their crops and also the consumers may not be put to unnecessary harassment?

Shri A. M. Thomas: We have taken into consideration all these aspects in fixing the maximum control price.

सेठ गोविन्द दास : क्या यह बात सही है कि सरकार ने चावल और घान की जो कीमतें मुकरर की हैं, छत्तीसगढ़ और मध्य प्रदेश के दूसरे क्षेत्रों में कीमतें उन से भी नीचे इसलिये गिर रही हैं और व्यापारी उन से इसलिये अनुचित लाभ उठा रहे हैं कि जो सरकार को खरीद करनी चाहिये थी उस का अभी तक ठीक प्रबन्ध नहीं हुआ है? और क्या सरकार इस सम्बन्ध में भी कुछ सोच रही है कि गेहूँ के सम्बन्ध में भी ऐसा न हो जैसा कि घान के सम्बन्ध में छत्तीसगढ़ में हुआ है?

Mr Deputy-Speaker: That is too wide a question of policy to be discussed now. We will be getting other opportunities during the budget discussion to discuss this matter. Even if we were to exhaust the whole of the remaining 50 minutes, it will not be finished.

सेठ गोविन्द दास उपाध्यक्ष जी,
 मेरे प्रश्न का उत्तर नहीं मिला?

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय . मैंने उन से कहा कि वे उत्तर न दें।

सेठ गोविन्द दास . इस की कोई बजह नहीं मालूम हुई।

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : मैंने बजह यह बयान की थी

This is too wide a question of policy to be discussed in answer to a question.

श्री श्रीरामदास : मैं ने यह जानना चाहा था कि बूकि क्वाट्रीसबड और मध्य प्रदेश दोनों जगह क्वबनमेंट ने बहा से घान, चावल और गेहू सब का बाहर जाना रोकना है इसलिये इस सम्बन्ध में क्या प्रबन्ध हो रहा है जिस में कम में कम जो कीमती सरकार ने मुकर्रर की हैं वह लोगों का मिलती जायें और घान के सम्बन्ध में जो गडबड हुई है वह गेहू के मिलसिले में न हो ?

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : अगर मेने गलती की है तो बहुतों एक बार कर दी, इसलिये धब धाबे बढना चाहिये ।

Shri Warrior: May I know whether an increase in the price of rice is recorded in Kerala, after the imposition of restrictions on the movement of paddy from Tanjore district?

Shri A. M. Thomas: It is too early to say, although in Kozhikode, it has increased by 8 annas per maund

Mr Deputy-Speaker: This is also a question of policy. Next question

Railway Sleepers

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*1015. { **Shri S. C. Samanta:**
Shri Subodh Hansda:
Sardar Iqbal Singh:
Shri Subiman Ghose:

Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No 753 on the 9th December, 1958 and state

(a) whether the allegations regarding the acceptance of defective sleepers supplied by Messrs Hanuman Foundries Ltd, Lillooah, Calcutta have been investigated, and

(b) if so, with what result?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shahnawaz Khan): (a) and (b) The case is still with the Special Police Establishment under their investigation which has not been completed yet.

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know whether any fresh order for sleepers

has been placed with this company and whether any order for any other item has been placed with this company?

The Minister of Railways (Shri Jagjivan Ram): I do not think any further order for the manufacture of sleepers has been placed with this company. Regarding this particular case, it is pending investigation.

Shri Subodh Hansda: May I know whether any loss has been incurred due to the defective supply of these sleepers from this company?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: The entire question is under investigation.

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy: May I know whether on account of this delay in the investigation, a large number of workers are sitting idle in those factories and whether any steps have been taken to provide them with employment and to see that this matter is disposed of as early as possible?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: I do not know whether the hon Member's suggestion is that pending investigation further orders should have been placed with them. So far as the investigation is concerned, we have requested the Special Police Establishment to expedite it.

Shri Jaipal Singh: Before supplies are made a technical officer inspects the supply. In this particular case, when the track supply officer made the complaint, there was a joint inspection by a member of the Railway Board and the DGS & D they "okayed" it and passed it. I do not know why this investigation is called for.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: What the hon Member says is theoretically correct. The investigation is on account of the fact that it was noticed that the sleepers were defective. The investigation is to find out whose fault it was.

Shri Jaipal Singh: My point is that this joint inspection "okayed" it. If their own staff "okay" it and then the