

quantity of power that will be generated in kwts.? Has that been worked out?

Shri Hathi: The revised estimate is Rs. 895.58 lakhs and the power generated will be 120,000 kwts.

Prices of Foodgrains

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*279. { **Shri S. M. Banerjee:**
Shri D. C. Sharma:
Shri Daljit Singh:

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

(a) whether prices of foodgrains specially wheat and rice have come down during May and June, 1960;

(b) if so, to what extent;

(c) in what States; and

(d) further steps, if any, taken to bring down the prices?

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

(a) The prices of rice and other kharif grains have actually risen to some extent during May and June 1960, as this is the lean period for these Kharif grains. The all-India index number of wholesale prices of rice increased from 108 in April to 113 in May and 114 in June, or an increase of 5.5% in May and June, 1960. The index number of wholesale prices of heat on the other hand, declined from 91 in April to 87 in May 1960 and remained unchanged at the same lower-level in June, 1960. This meant a decline in May and June 1960 of 4.5%.

(b) and (c). A statement is placed on the Table of the House showing the prices of rice, wheat, jowar and gram in certain important centres in different States from the end of April, 1960 to the end of June, 1960. [See Appendix I, annexure No. 79].

(d) The measures already taken to stabilise the prices of foodgrains at suitable levels which include large scale distribution of foodgrains from

Government stocks through fair price shops, restrictions on bank advances against foodgrains and on forward trading in foodgrains, as also the zonal restrictions on movement, are continuing.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: May I know whether, in view of the fact that Government has failed to check the fluctuation in the prices of foodgrains, the scheme of State trading in foodgrains will be implemented if not implemented now?

Shri A. M. Thomas: This matter has been explained more than once in this House. To the extent possible, the scheme of State trading is being implemented.

Shri Vajpayee: May I know the reason why the prices of rice obtaining in the State of Jammu and Kashmir have not been given in this statement? May I know also whether it is a fact that prices of rice vary in Jammu and Kashmir valley, though the rice is supplied at a common rate from the Centre?

Shri A. M. Thomas: It is well known that we are supplying rice to Jammu and Kashmir at subsidised rates. We are supplying large quantities of wheat also; and the larger consumption is of wheat.

Shri Vajpayee: Sir, the later part of my question has not been replied whether the Central Government has sent any directive to the State Government in regard to the prices of wheat and rice supplied by the Centre.

Shri A. M. Thomas: Yes, Sir; we have fixed the prices for supplies to consumers.

Shrimati Renu Chakravarty: May I know whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the report of the Foodgrains Committee—the Asoka Mehta Committee but the other committee on market arrivals—wherein criticism was made as to the way the prices of foodgrains have been computed by the statistician?

May I also know whether this price of Rs. 26 for medium rice has been obtained by the same method or the actual methods have been varied by any new means?

Shri A. M. Thomas: The actual facts have been verified and these figures have been entered. We have got our own agencies in the various States besides the reports that we get from various State Governments.

Shri D. C. Sharma: May I know whether fair price shops have been opened in all the States of India or whether they are being opened in some selected States?

Shri A. M. Thomas: 50,943 shops are functioning in the various parts of the country.

Shri Ranga: Is it not a fact that the value of the rupee has come down—that rupee is becoming cheaper—and is anything being done to stabilise the price of the rupee in order to enable the Government themselves to stabilise the price of rice?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri S. K. Patil): It is not for this Ministry to say. But, that may be one of the reasons why the prices rise.

Shrimati Ila Palchoudhuri: Has the Government received any complaints as to the quality of rice supplied in these fair price shops? Very often people complain that though they get rice they are not able to eat it.

Shri A. M. Thomas: That is not correct. Of course, some times complaints are being received about the quality of rice that is being distributed through the fair price shops. The shops are being periodically checked and as far as our information goes the rice supplied to the fair price shops is good rice.

Shri B. K. Gaikwad: Are Government aware that foodgrains are sold at higher rates in villages than in cities because the shopkeepers charge transportation charges from cities to villages? May I know whether Gov-

ernment can make arrangements to supply the foodgrains to the villagers at some cheaper rates than the rates prevailing in the cities?

Shri A. M. Thomas: It is well known that we are supplying wheat at the rate of Rs. 14/- and common variety rice at the rate of Rs. 16/-. Of course, transportation charges will have to be added to that rate for supply to be made to the villages.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: May I know whether Government are considering any change in the zonal system which is prevailing in the country presently; and also, whether it is a fact that Rajasthan is being tacked on to Bombay in the new system?

Shri S. K. Patil: That is under constant observation. But, so far as wheat is concerned, there is absolutely no reason why there should be any zone at all. We have plenty of wheat to give to anybody; and surely, the zones create a difficulty which is also an additional reason for the rise in prices.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: In view of the statement made by the hon. Minister may I know why the zones are not being abolished and the whole country made into one zone?

Shri S. K. Patil: I am constantly trying to abolish this; and, for the time being, so far as wheat is concerned, I think, in a very few days I shall be in a position to say whether they will exist or not.

Shri Vidya Charan Shukla: May I know whether Government have finalised their decision about the suggestion that they should announce the price policy regarding wheat and rice before the marketing season every year?

Shri A. M. Thomas: Procurement prices have been announced so that there is no further necessity to make any new announcement.

Shri Supakar: Though Orissa and West Bengal have been made into one zone, may I know why there is such

a great disparity in the prices prevailing in those States all through these months?

Shri S. K. Patil: As I have made it so clear in this House, again and again, the joining of Orissa with West Bengal is not 100 per cent natural because the deficit of Bengal is much more than the surplus of Orissa. Therefore, we can get some results but they cannot be to the entire satisfaction to eliminate all these differences.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: The wholesale prices have been given and the retail prices will possibly be round about Rs. 29. What were the prevailing prices on 25-6-59 last year.

Shri A. M. Thomas: Last year as far as the index goes, in August 1959, the index was 112.7 for rice and it is now 114.1.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: I do not want the index; I want the prices.

Shri A. M. Thomas: For which States and which places?

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: For West Bengal on 25. 6. 1959.

Shri A. M. Thomas: The price was varying from Rs. 26 to Rs. 30.4.0.

Shri Supakar: May I know if inspite of the fact that Orissa is tagged on to West Bengal, the prices in West Bengal have not gone down appreciably whereas the prices in Orissa have been steadily increasing? If so, what is the cause?

Shri S. K. Patil: We are examining this question with the Orissa Government almost from month to month and I do not think that all that is said is correct that the prices have risen to a point where it really causes any danger or where we should have a revision of that policy.

Shri Kalika Singh: May I know if the decline in prices of foodgrains in May and June 1960 was directly due to the deal with the USA under PL 480?

Shri S. K. Patil: I think it may be to a certain extent because there is plenty of wheat. But that declining process if it was only restricted to that and not to other elements coming in, will be a continuing feature. But the prices do not always depend on grains alone. They depend upon other circumstances too.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: While considering the proposal to wash away the zones may I know whether it has also been considered about the necessity of cordoning off the cities with a population of five lakhs and more?

Shri S. K. Patil: What I said was not washing away all zones. I was talking about the restrictions on wheat time Zones were not necessary. I am looking forward to a time when I shall have to come before this House very soon when the prices will go down and we shall have to protect the farmers everywhere from the falling prices. For that purpose, something else will have to be done.

Shri Chintamani Panigrahi: May I know whether the Government is aware that all the foodgrains which were exported from Orissa to West Bengal really found their market in West Bengal or whether they were hoarded and blackmarketed or smuggled to East Pakistan?

Shri A. M. Thomas: There is no question of black-marketing in West Bengal now because the controls with regard to prices have been lifted.

Shri Yadav Narayan Jadhav: May I know whether it is a fact that the local wheat or the atta of local wheat is not available in any of the fair price or other shops in Delhi or in other places in the country?

Shri A. M. Thomas: It is not correct. Any quantity of wheat needed is being made available.

Shri Indrajit Gupta: May I know whether the Government is aware of the fact that when talks were being held between the West Bengal Government and the Government of Orissa

recently regarding the movement of rice from Orissa to Bengal, the spokesmen of the Orissa Government publicly declared that there seemed to be no justification for the gap between the prices in Orissa and the prices in West Bengal?

Shri S. K. Patil: Maybe. I do not know what exactly their talks were. I have no report of the talks. So far as the position of Orissa is concerned Orissa has got a stock of rice which will have to be sold to West Bengal.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: From the statement it appears that in eight States the prices have risen since June. In U.P. also it is so. In view of the hon. Minister's statement that there is no shortage, why are the prices going up in these States?

Shri S. K. Patil: I have again and again said that the prices of food-grains do not entirely depend upon foodgrains alone because there are other things also. The hon. Member here mentioned one such thing. The value of the rupee might have gone down. These are all factors that go into it. But I may make a statement of fact that so far as wheat is concerned there is no dearth of wheat nor is there going to be any.

Shri D. C. Sharma: From the statement I find that prices have been listed only with reference to one place in every State. For instance the price of Punjab is listed with reference to Moga only. Is it not a fact that the prices at Moga are more favourable than the prices at other places? What is the criterion adopted by the Government to arrive at the index of the food prices? Is it that they depend upon those mandis where the prices are the lowest or on the other mandis also where the prices are higher?

Shri A. M. Thomas: It is not possible to give the prices in all the centres in all the States. We have made some selections. These centres have also assumed All India importance and so we have given only the All-India centres. But for Punjab we

have given two centres: Moga as well as Abohar.

Sea Island "Andrews" Cotton

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*280. { **Shri Vasudevan Nair:**
Shri Warrior:
Shri A. K. Gopalan:

Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 2406 on the 21st April, 1960 and state:

(a) whether Government have taken any further steps to stabilise the price level of Sea Island "Andrews" variety cotton before the crop comes for auction;

(b) whether Government have prepared any other schemes to encourage more extensive cultivation of this variety; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

The Deputy Minister of Agriculture (Shri M. V. Krishnappa): (a) No.

(b) No.

(c) Does not arise.

Shri Vasudevan Nair: May I know whether the cultivation of this cotton has suffered due to the sharp fall in prices last year?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: No, Sir. I think it has increased by three times. The year before last we had grown only 200 bales of this cotton but this year we have grown 600 bales and we intend to grow 25,000 bales in the coming year.

Shri Vasudevan Nair: What is the demand of this variety of cotton in our country and what is the actual production?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: It is estimated that if we grow nearly two lakh bales of this long-staple variety which India has to import now, it would be sufficient for us. We can think of exporting the long staple cotton if we grow more.

Shri Tangamani: On a previous occasion we were told that in Kerala