

there is no danger to this country from such locust activity?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: We have to watch the situation all along. For the time being, it appears that there is no immediate danger. But, I am to inform the House that some locusts are always present on the soil of India throughout. In spite of the fact that they may not be able to form swarms and do damage on a large scale, there is a huge area where locust breed of a local nature is always carried on.

Prices of Raw Jute

*140. **Shri L. N. Mishra:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that prices of raw jute in Bihar have been very low during the months of February, March and April this year;

(b) if so, the reasons for the same; and

(c) how these compare with the prices of the previous year?

The Minister of Co-operation (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Compare favourably.

Shri L. N. Mishra: In view of the fact that the prices of raw jute have often been subjected to wide fluctuations by the speculative activities of private traders, have Government considered the proposal of putting this commodity also under the sphere of the State Trading Corporation?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: That would be more for the Commerce and Industry Ministry to decide.

Shri L. N. Mishra: In view of the fact that the Ministry of Food and Agriculture had made a definite recommendation to the Jute Enquiry Commission that a minimum price for raw jute be fixed every year, may I know whether the Food and Agriculture Ministry has been pursuing this point still?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: It is always the view of the Food and Agriculture Ministry that some steps should be taken to assure the jute growers a fair price. I cannot say, what ultimate view the Commerce and Industry Ministry has taken and how far we have succeeded in this.

Shri L. N. Mishra: If it is view of the Food and Agriculture Ministry that a fair price should be got by the raw jute growers, may I know why the recommendation of the Jute Enquiry Commission that a Jute Commission be set up has not materialised?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: I would like to have notice.

Shri A. C. Guha: The hon. Minister has admitted that the Food and Agriculture Ministry always wants that a fair price should be fixed to ensure an economic price to the jute growers, is it not the responsibility of this Ministry to protect the jute growers' interest and if there is anything in between their desire and its fulfilment, is it not the duty of this Ministry to see that the desire is fulfilled and the growers ensured an economic price?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Firstly, my hon. friend is reading more than I said in my reply. I did not say that we have recommended any minimum price. I said it is the view of the Food and Agriculture Ministry that the grower must get a reasonable price. What particular steps will achieve this result, I did not disclose.

Shri L. N. Mishra: It is in the statement of the Ministry.

Shri S. C. Samanta: In reply to part (a), the hon. Minister said, no. May I know whether it is a fact that the growers who were selling jute at that time were selling at a lower price whereas those who bought them were selling at a higher price in Calcutta?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: There are local variations and from time to time also there are price variations. I have myself complained that very often these fluctuations are very violent and cause a lot of damage to the interests of the agriculturists, but in this particular case, the variations are not too much. For instance, in Purnea in 1956 the average price was Rs. 24-8-0, now it has gone down only by eight annas so far as February and April are concerned. In the other months it is more. That is why I said that the fluctuations are not very high in these months.

Shri Jhunjhunwala: Arising out of the answer of the Minister of Agriculture that it is the view of his Ministry that proper price should be paid to the jute growers, may I know what steps the Ministry has taken to realise that object and whether they consulted the Commerce and Industry Ministry on this point as he has said that it is the function of the Commerce and Industry Ministry?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: It would not be possible for me to describe all the steps that are possible to achieve this end in reply to a question, but this is a matter to which, not only in respect of jute but all commodities produced by the agriculturists, the Food and Agriculture Ministry attaches the highest importance, as otherwise the production will never go up, but I cannot describe all the steps.

Shri Thirumal Rao: Is it not the policy of the Food and Agriculture Ministry to consult the Commerce Ministry in regard to jute which is a dollar-earning cash crop?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: It is not a matter of consultation. Whenever we feel that some steps are necessary for improvement in the prices, we make a recommendation to them and they take the step.

Shri Ranga: Is it not a fact that for a number of years a minimum price was fixed by the Bengal Government—I do not know whether the Bihar Government did so or not—and it was

enforced also by the Bengal Government? They provided special funds for that purpose.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: I would like to have notice of the question.

Master Plan for Delhi

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*141. { **Shri Radha Raman:**
Shri D. C. Sharma:

Will the Minister of Health be pleased to state:

(a) the latest position of the Master Plan for Delhi;

(b) when the complete Plan will be presented to the Lok Sabha; and

(c) when it is proposed to be implemented?

The Minister of Health (Shri Karmarkar): (a) The Town Planning Organisation submitted an Interim General Plan for Greater Delhi in September, 1956 and the preparation of the final Master Plan is now in progress.

(b) It will be available to the Members of Parliament as soon as it is ready.

(c) The question of implementing the Plan will arise only after it has been duly scrutinised and approved by the Government.

Shri Radha Raman: The hon. Minister just now said that an interim plan was published very recently. May I know if copies of it were supplied to Members of Parliament and if they were not supplied, whether they will be supplied now?

Shri Karmarkar: I would like to make myself sure as to whether they were supplied, but so far as I can see they have not been, and in order to enable Members of Parliament to buy it, we have priced it very reasonably at two rupees and odd. The first edition is of 500 copies, and maybe it will take some time to be sold out, and the hon. Member will do well to purchase his copy.