

the months of November, December and January the prices of rice in Madras ration shops have gone up by one rupee per measure and, if so, for what reasons and may I also know whether Government will see that such sudden rise in prices will not occur hereafter.

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: The relaxation in control synchronised with the fall end of the season and the failure of rains in the south, there was a little increase in the price of rice but as we expected, with the harvest, the prices are declining now. In Madras the price of rice in the open market is almost at par with the issue prices.

श्री पी० आर० राव : क्या मैं जान सकता हूँ कि हैदराबाद स्टेट में जो इस साल खास हालात पैदा हो रहे हैं उन की रिपोर्ट सेंट्रल गवर्नमेंट के पास पहुँची है ?

श्री किदवाई : हैदराबाद स्टेट में इस साल खास हालात यह हुए हैं कि वहाँ पैदावार बहुत हुई है और बाजार में कीमत बहुत गिर गई है ।

श्री पी० आर० राव : हैदराबाद स्टेट में खास किसम के हालात हैं । पेपर्स में रोजाना उन की इतलाआत आती है, खास कर तेलंगाना, नलगोंडा और वारंगल जिलों के बारे में . . .

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : आप सवाल पूछिये ।

The hon. Member has been only giving information.

श्री पी० आर० राव : क्या उन हालात को दूर करने के लिये हुकूमत ने कुछ गल्ला देने का फैसला किया है ?

श्री किदवाई : वहाँ से गल्ला हम दूसरी जगहों को भेज रहे हैं ।

Shri K. K. Basu: May I know whether fair price shops have been closed anywhere in the rural areas in Bengal, and if so, where and for what reasons?

Shri Kidwai: Because the outside prices are lower than the prices in the fair price shops. Whenever necessary the West Bengal Government have sufficient stocks in hand to re-open the shops in Twenty-Four Parganas.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Next question.

TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE (TEA INDUSTRY)

***53. Shri Madhao Reddi:** Will the Minister of Labour be pleased to state what are the important decisions arrived at in the "Tripartite Conference" on Tea Industry which met in Calcutta on the 19th and 20th of December, 1952?

The Minister of Labour (Shri V. V. Giri): The important conclusions were:

(i) A tripartite commission, with regional sub-committees, should be appointed by Government immediately to investigate into the cost structure of the tea industry.

(ii) Pending the report of the Commission, relief by way of refund of the duty collected by the Central Government should be given at specified rates to tea gardens in the different regions.

(iii) Gardens which have suffered loss during the year 1951 and/or 1952 should be granted relief by way of long-term loans to the extent of the short-fall during this period.

(iv) There should be no revision of the minimum wages awards to the detriment of labour after the above proposals have been accepted and during the pendency of the enquiry by the tripartite commission.

These conclusions were embodied in a resolution adopted by the Committee. Government, however, were not a party to this resolution.

Shri Madhao Reddi: May I know what advice the Central Government gave to the parties concerned with regard to the supply of tea to labourers at subsidised rates?

Shri V. V. Giri: That question was answered in an exhaustive manner by my hon. friend Mr. Krishnamachari yesterday.

Shri H. N. Shastri: Are the Government aware that Governments of Assam and West Bengal have in complete disregard of the conclusions of the Tripartite Conference, curtailed the wages of tea workers?

Shri V. V. Giri: That may be so. We are trying to discuss this matter at the Standing Committee meeting on the 27th and 28th.

Shri H. N. Shastri: In the meantime is it proposed to put off the decisions that have been taken by the two Governments in this respect?

Shri V. V. Giri: Unfortunately, as the hon. Member is aware it is the

State Governments that have to deal with this matter and the Central Government cannot give a direction.

Shri R. K. Chaudhuri: May I know in what respect the Government of Assam have lowered the wages in the tea estates? Have they not granted an additional wage and raised the D.A. from four annas to five annas?

Shri V. V. Giri: I take the information from the hon. Member.

Shri P. T. Chacko: Yesterday, the hon. Minister for Commerce and Industry said in this House that there was no agreed decision or agreement at the Calcutta Tripartite Conference. May I know what was the reason why the three parties could not agree on any question at this conference?

Shri V. V. Giri: Because they could not agree. It was a bipartite and not a tripartite one.

Shri Nambiar: What was the point of disagreement, so that that could be removed?

Shri V. V. Giri: There were many points of disagreement. The whole matter is being thrashed out by all the parties.

Shri K. K. Basu: Is it the intention of the Government to hold a tripartite conference after the workers have been retrenched and are made to starve?

Shri V. V. Giri: It is not the intention.

Shri B. S. Murthy: May I know why the Government were not able to agree to the bipartite agreement between the employers and the employees?

Shri V. V. Giri: It was not considered practical.

Shri G. P. Sinha: Who was responsible for this failure?

Shri V. V. Giri: Nobody.

FOOD PRICES

*54. **Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) what is the recent trend in the prices of food articles;

(b) whether any State Governments have increased food prices recently; and

(c) whether any representations have been made to Government in this regard?

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri M. V. Krishnappa): Presumably the Member is referring to

foodgrains. If the presumption is correct the replies to parts (a), (b) and (c) are as follows:—

(a) Generally, the open market prices of rice are either declining or steady; millet prices are steady and wheat prices are firm except in Bihar where they are declining.

(b) and (c). Procurement and issue prices of foodgrains have been raised in a few cases at the request of the State Governments concerned.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: May I know whether the decline in food prices is uniform throughout the country or does it vary from state to state?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: It varies from state to state.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: What is the special reason for this variation?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: It depends on the production there. If there is failure of rains in particular parts of the country, there you can expect that the decline, as compared to other surplus areas, will be less.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: Has it come to the notice of the Government that recently in Mysore food prices have been increased and due to the increase in food prices there has been mass agitation?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: It is true that in Mysore the issue prices were increased from 1st January, 1953. Prior to that date wheat and milo were being sold at below economic cost and the loss was made up to some extent by the profit made on local rice and that on wheat consequent on the retrospective reduction of the pool price of wheat from 1st March, 1952. As the profit on wheat had been wiped off, the issue price of wheat and milo had to be increased to about the economic cost. Even those increased prices are at par with the issue prices prevailing in Madras and Bombay. Hitherto they were able to subsidise it and sell at a lower price. As the subsidy has been wiped out, and they are not able to keep up the subsidy, the prices have increased. But, even the increased price is below economic cost.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: In view of the fact that the purchasing power of the consumers is declining, the recent rise in the food prices has caused a great injury to the interests of the consumers.