

cussion (during the last session) regarding Maharashtra famine areas. Madras is affected and so also other parts.

Shri Kidwai: We can place a statement on the Table of the House every fortnight.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: That will ease the situation.

Sardar A. S. Saigal: We want that it should be circulated to Members.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Certainly it will be circulated to Members.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: In the Press it will be available far earlier than we can give it.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Next question.

SUGAR FACTORIES

*139. **Shri S. C. Singhal:** (a) Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state whether the sugar factories have started production late in the Punjab and U.P. and if so, what is the reason for it and how will it affect the production of sugar?

(b) Is it a fact that the sugar mill-owners have paid in sugar to the cane-suppliers for the price of the cane and the mill-owners purchased the same sugar back from the cane growers at reduced prices?

(c) How much money do the sugar mill-owners owe to the cane growers at present?

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): (a) Yes. The main reason for late starting of the sugar factories in U. P. and Punjab this season is that the cane crop in areas of most of the factories is poor. It was, therefore, not necessary for factories to start early to crush the available cane. Further, as recovery of sugar in the early part of the season is low, most of the factories delayed crushing in order to obtain higher average recovery.

The loss in production due to late starting of factories in U. P. and the Punjab is about 78,000 tons. The total production in these States upto 31st January last year was 3.58 lakh tons as compared with 2.80 lakh tons this year.

(b) Yes. The sugar factories have paid for cane in the form of sugar in cases where such mode of payment was acceptable to the cane suppliers. No case of the factories purchasing back

such sugar from the cane growers at reduced rates has, however, been brought to the notice of the Government.

(c) In U.P., the arrears of cane price in respect of 1951/52 season on 31st January, 1953, totalled Rs. 1.5 crores. In the Punjab, where there is only one factory, the amount remaining unpaid was only Rs. 23,000.

Shri T. N. Singh: In view of the supplementary grant of the order of crores made by Parliament for this purpose, why are the payments of these labourers still being withheld and does not yet cleared up?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): Government has not distributed the whole amount yet. Payment is being made as we receive the bills of sale. Corresponding payment to cane growers will be made every week.

Shri T. N. Singh: Is there any prospect of early clearance of these dues as a result of Government action?

Shri Kidwai: They must be cleared this month.

Shri N. Sreekantan Nair: Are Government aware that the millowners have created a scarcity in South India and on that ground there was a news item published by the P. T. I. in the South Indian papers that Government intend controlling the export of sugar and gur?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Government have no information.

Shri S. N. Das: Arising out of answer to part (b) of the question, are Government aware of the quantity of sugar given to the sugar-cane growers and the price?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: We have no complete information; but we believe that the quantity was very small.

TRANSFER OF COMMERCIAL OFFICE FROM GORAKHPUR TO CALCUTTA

*140. **Shri R. N. Singh:** (a) Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether Government are aware of the inconvenience and hardship that has been caused to the public of the three districts of Banaras, Sonopore and Samastipur as a result of the transfer of the commercial office of the former O.T. Railway from Gorakhpur to Calcutta and are they aware of the delay involved in dealing with their claims from a distant place like Calcutta?