

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): (a) Attention is invited to Finance Minister's speech in the House of the People on 20-5-52 in connection with the debate on President's address.

(b) The position was explained in detail to the State Ministers at the Food Conference held in February 1952. The State Ministers were generally of the view that there was no help against the withdrawal of subsidy. They, however, pressed that milo may be subsidised a little more liberally and this the Government of India have since done.

Shri B. R. Bhagat: May I know whether the reports crediting the hon. Minister for food and Agriculture with favouring the reinstatement of food subsidy in some form to lower the prices of foodgrains without committing the Government.....

Mr. Speaker: I do not propose to allow this question.

Shri H. N. Shastri: What steps, if any, do Government propose to take to remove the hardships inflicted upon the low paid income groups as a result of the abolition of food subsidy?

Shri Kidwai: In some towns, there has been no increase in the prices of foodgrains. In some places the rise or fall in the cost of living index automatically affects the dearness allowance. In some other places we are taking steps to see that the price of foodgrains is reduced.

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: May I know whether the Government intend to reconsider the restoration of subsidies, and if that is not possible, at least in the scarcity areas like Rayalaseema and the contiguous areas of Mysore?

Shri Kidwai: Whatever is required to give relief in the scarcity areas is being done. The food subsidy question was only about a certain number of industrial towns. As the hon. Member comes from Mysore, he should know that in Mysore, prices have been reduced.

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: Only wheat prices have been reduced.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Shri Pataskar: Is food subsidy paid to surplus States also?

Shri Kidwai: Food subsidy was given for a number of towns, whether they were in surplus or deficit States.

Shri Pataskar: My question is whether food subsidy is being paid to

States which are surplus in foodgrains.

Shri Kidwai: Food subsidy is not paid to any State which is surplus.

Shri V. B. Gandhi: Is it a fact that the Government of Bombay has represented that all restrictions on inter-state movement of foodgrains should be abolished and a uniform policy of procurement all over the country should be adopted?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. It is no use asking this. These are facts which are well known. Practically, the hon. Member is trying to argue.

Shri Radhelal Vyas: May I know the towns in Madhya Bharat where milo is being subsidised by the Government of India?

Shri Kidwai: Milo has been given to each State on reduced prices. It is for the States to decide where to distribute that.

Shri B. R. Bhagat: May I know whether a Conference of Food Ministers of the States is going to be called, and if so, whether this question is going to be examined?

Shri Kidwai: I do not think there is any proposal immediately before the Government to convene any meeting of the Food Ministers.

Mr. Speaker: Next question.

JUTE CULTIVATION

*133. **Shri B. K. Das:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) what is the average yield of jute per acre in the principal jute-growing States;

(b) what are the reasons that have so far hampered a higher yield;

(c) what steps are being taken to improve the yield; and

(d) whether during the current year the target of production is contemplated to be achieved by bringing more land under cultivation or by adopting effective methods for higher yield?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): (a) Average yield of jute per acre during 1951-52 was:—

	Ibs. Per annum.
Assam	1005
Bihar	785
Orissa	959
West Bengal	1064

- (b) Weather conditions mainly.
- (c) (i) Distribution of improved seeds.
- (ii) Distribution of fertilisers.
- (iii) Construction of retting tanks.
- (iv) Establishment of seed multiplication farms.
- (v) Conduct of subvention trials and demonstration of methods of line-sowing.

(d) The target of production for 1952-53 is proposed to be achieved both by extensive and intensive cultivation.

Shri B. K. Das: What has been the highest yield per acre in the past, in those areas?

Shri Kidwai: I will require notice of the question.

Shrimati Renu Chakravarty: Will the hon. Minister tell us the area of paddy-growing land which has been given over to jute cultivation?

Shri Kidwai: I will require notice of the question.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know what proportion of our jute requirement is met by local production?

Shri Kidwai: I require notice.

Mr. Speaker: I think there were a number of questions on this subject in the last session. If hon. Members will only care to refer to the old proceedings, they will get all the information.

Shri A. M. Thomas: May I know whether any enquiry has been conducted in Travancore-Cochin as to the possibility of cultivating jute there?

Shri Kidwai: I require notice. I am not aware where jute has been tried and it has failed and where it has not been tried.

पंडित ए० जार० शास्त्री : क्या माननीय मंत्री महोदय को मालूम है कि उत्तर प्रदेश के पूर्वी जिलों में भी ऐसी भूमि है जिस में जूट की पैदावार बहुत अच्छी होती है ? क्या उसकी खेती बढ़ाने की कोई कोशिश हो रही है ?

[**Pandit A. E. Shastri:** Is the hon. Minister aware that there is a certain kind of land in the eastern districts of Uttar Pradesh which yields a

good crop of jute? Is any effort being made to increase its production?]

श्री किडवाई : यह तो मुझे मालूम है कि वहां कुछ जूट पैदा होता था, लेकिन वह बहुत अच्छा है इसकी कोई तफसील नहीं है। उत्तर प्रदेश गवर्नमेंट खुद जूट की पैदावार बढ़ाने की कोशिश कर रही है।

[**Shri Kidwai:** I know that there was some jute cultivation there. but it is not known whether it is of a superior quality. Uttar Pradesh Government is itself trying to step up jute production.]

GANGA-BRAHMAPUTRA TRANSPORT BOARD

*134. **Shri S. N. Das:** Will the Minister of Transport be pleased to state:

(a) what are the functions of the Ganga-Brahmaputra Transport Board recently appointed by Government;

(b) what is the non-recurring and recurring expenditure involved; and

(c) whether the Board has begun functioning?

The Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri L. B. Shastri): (a) The attention of the hon. Member is invited to my reply to starred question No. 49 by Shri A. C. Guha given on the floor of the House on the 20th May 1952.

(b) The Central Government have already made a contribution of Rs. 2 lakhs to the Board in 1951-52 and include a similar provision in the budget for 1952-53. Contributions are proposed to be maintained at this rate during the period of the Five Year Plan. The State Governments concerned are expected to contribute each Rs. one lakh per year.

(c) The Board will be meeting shortly to formulate its programme of work.

Shri S. N. Das: May I know whether any survey was made before the appointment of this Board regarding the possibilities and potentialities of these rivers for transport purposes?

Shri L. B. Shastri: A survey has been made and information collected in regard to the possibilities of navigation in several rivers.

Shri J. N. Hazarika: Has the Government felt it necessary to make any