

in this connection whether they have sought the assistance of the Central Government?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Yes, Sir: Madras Government has been quite active in this respect.

Shri B. S. Murthy: What assistance is given to the Madras Government?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Whatever assistance is available is always given.

Shri Nambiar: May I know whether any fishing bank is organised on the west coast of Malabar?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: I think I have mentioned this in my reply already. Not to a very large extent; to a certain extent, it has been.

WASTAGE OF FOODGRAINS IN BIHAR

*323. **Sardar A. S. Saigal:** (a) Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state whether the attention of Government has been drawn to an article under the caption "1985 tons foodgrains wastage in Bihar" published in column 4 of page 3 of the *Hindustan Standard* seventh day edition dated the 25th August, 1952 issued from Calcutta?

(b) What was the reason for the wastage?

(c) Who is responsible for the loss of foodgrains?

(d) What is the actual value of the loss suffered?

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri M. V. Krishnappa):

(a) Yes.

(b) Natural deterioration.

(c) None.

(d) About Rs. 3 lakhs.

सरदार ए० एस० सहगल : कूल कितना वन खराब हुआ ?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: It is not exactly waste. It is deteriorated grain. About 3 lakhs worth of grain deteriorated.

Shri B. S. Murthy: Who has taken the loss: consumers or the tax-payer?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: Ultimately the tax-payer.

Shri S. N. Das: In what way were these deteriorated foodgrains disposed of?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: By public auction.

Shri S. N. Das: May I know whether they were examined if they were fit for human use?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: Only when they were found unfit for human consumption that they were put to public auction.

PHONOGRAM SYSTEM IN BIHAR

*324. **Sardar A. S. Saigal:** (a) Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state whether phonogram system has been introduced in the post offices at Jharia, Dhanbad and Katragarh in Bihar?

(b) In how many more places this system of phonogram will be introduced in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh States?

(c) What expenditure have Government to bear to instal this system in each place?

The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) Yes.

(b) 17 places in Bihar and 3 in Madhya Pradesh.

(c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House in due course.

MINIMUM PRICES OF FOODGRAINS

*325. **Shri Jhulan Sinha:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state the policy of Government regarding the guarantee of minimum price for foodgrains to provide an incentive to agricultural production?

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): The Government of India at present do not have any policy of guaranteeing the minimum prices of foodgrains. Such a policy existed from 1944-45 to 1947-48, but it was abandoned as a result of rise in prices of foodgrains.

Shri Jhulan Sinha: May I know if it forms an important recommendation in the report of the Grow More Food Committee?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Yes, Sir. There is a recommendation to that effect.

Shri Jhulan Sinha: Is the Government taking that into consideration.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: It is being considered.

Shri Jhulan Sinha: Has any decision been reached in the matter?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Not yet.