

Mr. Chairman: Question No. 461.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad: May I suggest that Q. No. 500 may also be answered along with this one?

Mr. Chairman: The hon. Minister may consider whether he can answer the two together.

FOODGRAINS AND OILSEEDS

*461. **Shri Bishwa Nath Roy:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the prices of foodgrains and oilseeds are rapidly falling to unremunerative levels;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to take any steps for stabilising the prices; and

(c) whether Government propose to open purchasing centres in the areas where the prices have fallen to very low levels or where middle men have forced the agriculturists to sell foodgrains at cheap rates?

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): (a) There has been a general fall in the prices of foodgrains and oilseeds but the prices have not reached unremunerative levels, except in certain isolated pockets.

(b) Government are already taking steps to prevent a sharp and sudden fall in agricultural prices.

(c) The Governments of six States have already been authorised to undertake purchases of coarse grains in the affected areas.

Shri Biswa Nath Roy: May I know whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the fact that in the colonisation area of U. P. oilseeds are being sold at present at the rate of about Rs. 15 per maund and similar is the case with the low rates of paddy and other foodgrains there?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: So far as I can see, there is a report from Basti in U.P. I do not know if there is any other complaint.

Shri Bishwa Nath Roy: I mean in the colonisation area in U. P. where the State Government farm is the biggest in Asia.

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

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: May I know what will be the future policy of the Government in regard to the State trading in the falling agricultural market in view of the recommendation of the Taxation Enquiry Commission that States should not enter into trade in the falling market?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: The Taxation Enquiry Commission's Report has yet to be analysed and decided upon by the Government. I think the hon. Member will have to wait for a reply to this question till then.

Kumari Annie Mascarene: May I know whether the Government will see to the maintenance of prices in conformity with the average income of the individual?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: There are many considerations which govern our price policy but I do not know how far this consideration will have much to do because this is something that is new.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. Minister wanted to say something.

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. P. Jain): I wanted to say that the Government have no idea of entering into State trading in any general way. Government have so far decided to make purchases as a measure of relief in certain *mandis* (markets) where the prices of certain foodgrains, have gone too low. And, those purchases are going to be made from the agriculturists direct and not from the middlemen.

Shri Dabhi: May I know on what basis Government have decided that the present price level has not gone down so as to be unremunerative and whether Government have purchased grains from agriculturists in any area?

Shri A. P. Jain: We have taken a number of factors, namely, the comparative price indices, procurement prices in some years etc., into account, and have come to the conclusion that Rs. 10 per maund for wheat may be taken as a price which could not be considered to be unremunerative. The prices of foodgrains, namely, *Bajra*, *Jawar* and *Maize* have been fixed on a parity basis of Rs. 10 per maund for wheat.

Shri Dabhi: My second part of the question is not answered.

श्री किशोरी मिश्र : क्या सरकार को पता है कि धान गत वर्ष १६ रुपये मन बिकता था और इस साल धान ८ रुपये मन बिकता है और इसी तरह से ज्वार, बाजरा और ऐसी दूसरी चीजों को भी सरकार बहुत कम भाव पर खरीदने को तैयार है। उत्तर बिहार में चम्पारन और मुजफ्फरपुर के नेपाल समीपवर्ती इलाकों में भी ८ रुपये मन धान बिकता है। कपड़ के भाव तो २ प्रतिशत ही गिरा है, जब कि धान तथा अन्य चीजों के भाव ५० प्रतिशत गिर गए हैं। क्या मैं जान सकता हूँ कि सरकार इस सम्बन्ध में क्या कार्यवाही कर रही है ?

Shri A. P. Jain: It is a fact that while the price of foodgrains has gone down, the price of manufactured goods, which the peasant generally consumes, has not shown any tendency to go down. Government has been making every effort to help the agriculturists. In the case of certain agricultural produce, we have liberalised the export policy; e.g., in the case of rice, we have taken away the export duty of 20 per cent. and are encouraging the export of rice. We have also allowed a liberal quota for export of oilseeds. As I said before, we have also started purchasing coarse foodgrains in certain specified areas where the prices had gone down below the level fixed.

NEW RAILWAY FACTORY

*464. **Shri D. C. Sharma:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to construct another factory for the

manufacture of wagons in the near future;

(b) if so, when it will be implemented;

(c) whether any place has been selected for the purpose; and

(d) the estimated amount required to start the factory?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d). Do not arise.

Shri D. C. Sharma: Is it not a fact that the Railway Ministry is suffering from a shortage of wagons? If so, how are they going to make up the deficiency?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: Although there may be a certain shortage of wagons at present, our indigenous capacity to produce wagons is coming up to anything in the neighbourhood of 12,000 wagons a year, and we feel that that would be quite sufficient for future requirements.

Shri D. C. Sharma: May I know how long it will take for the supply of wagons produced in India to catch up with the demands of wagons required in India?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: At the very outset, three to four years.

Shri D. C. Sharma: In view of the fact that there is a lag between the requirements of wagons and the production of wagons, is it not economical to produce wagons in India rather than send orders to other countries for supply to India?

Mr. Chairman: That will be entering into argument.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: May I know whether indigenous production is from the British-owned factories in India or Indian-owned factories?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): Some of the wagon manufacturing firms continue to retain their European