

Inland Water Transport in the Kerala State; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken thereon?

The Deputy Minister of Civil Aviation (Shri Mohiuddin): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The State Government have been requested to carry out traffic and engineering surveys in respect of their schemes in the light of their discussions with the Gokhale Committee which visited Kerala in February.

The State Government are however anxious to start construction of a new Canal between Mahe Puzha and Murat Puzha urgently. This proposal is under consideration.

Shri Joachim Alva: Apart from inland transport in Kerala, have Government received a proposal from the Rumanian Government offering assistance to construct small vessels throughout the inland waters on the Danube pattern and to receive our manganese and iron ore in return?

Shri Mohiuddin: This question is hardly connected with the main question. If the hon. Member gives notice about the Rumanian offer, I shall make enquiries about it.

Freight Concessions for Coir Yarn and Rope

*1864. **Shri Kumaran:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 1688 on the 11th September, 1957 regarding cancellation of concession rate of railway freight for movement of coir yarn and rope from Cochin Harbour Terminus and Kozhikode to Shalimar (Calcutta) and state what action has been taken as regards the restoration of the freight concession?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri S. V. Ramaswami): The matter has been under correspondence between the Southern Railway and the Coir Board, Ernakulam, and the full information required has been received only very recently. A decision will be taken soon.

Shri Kumaran: May I know whether Government will take an early decision taking into account the fact that this concession was enjoyed by the industry for more than 30 years and the fact that the continuance of the withdrawal of the concession will hit hard the industry, which is engaged in a struggle for existence now?

Shri S. V. Ramaswami: The information was not full. Therefore, an inspector was sent. He has returned with full information only recently. A decision will be taken soon.

Shri Tangamani: Even yesterday, the Minister of Industry said that the coir industry was going to be helped by sending even a delegation to foreign countries. This concession for coir yarn and coir rope has been in existence before 1-1-1957....

Mr. Speaker: He goes on delivering a speech. It is a small question. What does he want to ask?

Shri Tangamani: Under the Second Five Year Plan.....

Mr. Speaker: Leave all that alone. What does he want to know?

Shri Tangamani: Although the concession was stopped from 1-1-1957, whereby for each maund there is a loss of Rs. 1-8, and the assurance was given as early as 11th September, 1957, may I know how long Government are going to take for settling this question?

Shri S. V. Ramaswami: My previous answer applies to this also.

Mr. Speaker: As early as possible.

Shri Tangamani: In September, 1957 also, the very same reply was given, that reports were being received and the matter was under consideration. I would like to know how long Government will take to come to a decision?

Shri S. V. Ramaswami: The position is altered now because we have got the necessary information. This information was received only recently, a

few days back. Kindly allow Government some time to consider it.

Shri Narayanankutty Menon: As the industry was enjoying this concession for a long time, may I know what were the considerations which weighed with the Railway Board, the railway authorities, to withdraw the concession, and whether Government was consulted before the concession was withdrawn?

Shri S. V. Ramaswami: It is not with this coir alone but it was a general question. The station-to-station rate was withdrawn in view of certain considerations. Those considerations were 4 in number. First of all, we had to increase the income from the railways; then, there is shortage of wagon; the cost of operation has increased and there is also the need for desisting from diverting traffic to other modes of transport, particularly sea transport. These were the considerations that prevailed with us.

Shri Kumaran: May I know whether the Government is aware of the fact that the coir yarn trade was preferring the rail route because of the difficulty of getting shipping space and also because of the fact that if the yarn is transported by steamers it gets spoiled and damaged?

Shri S. V. Ramaswami: I would require notice for that. The point really is a matter of principle.....

Mr. Speaker: If the hon. Minister wants notice why does he pursue the matter?

Food Production

1865. **Shri Surendranath Dwivedy:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) the final targets of additional food production by the end of the Second Plan; and

(b) the final targets of food imports for the period of the Second Plan?

The Deputy Minister of Agriculture (Shri M. V. Krishnappa): (a) The target of additional food production by the end of the Second Plan period has been fixed at 15.5 million tons.

(b) There was provision for the import of 6 million tons of foodgrains in the Second Plan. While it is clear that this figure will be exceeded, no revised figure for the entire Plan period has been decided upon. The quantity to be imported every year will depend on several factors such as crop conditions, marketable surplus in relation to demand, prevailing prices, world supply position etc.

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy: Regarding import, may I know whether Government have accepted the basis proposed by the Foodgrains Enquiry Committee?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: The basis that they proposed was that India would require a total of 3 million tons per year and we have in our stocks more than 1½ million tons of foodgrains in buffer stocks and there is an import programme of nearly 2½ million tons. It depends upon various factors, the next monsoon, how it starts and how it behaves and the next crop itself. All these various factors have to be taken into consideration.

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy: About additional food production targets, may I know whether any extra amount has been allotted for this purpose?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: There is no extra amount allotted. The only thing is that in other Ministries we have pruned the Budget; but, here, in the Agriculture Ministry, the money allotted has been almost kept up.

Shri Ramanathan Chettiar: About additional food targets various figures have been given. Some time ago the figure of 10.5 million tons was given and now the Deputy Minister has said that 15.5 million tons will be the additional target. May I know which