

(ii) Annual Report of the National Small Industries Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 1981-82 along with Audited Accounts and the comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(5) A statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in the papers mentioned at (4) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT-6062/83]

CENTRAL INDUSTRIAL SECURITY FORCE (FIRST AMENDMENT), RULES, 1983, BORDER SECURITY FORCE (AMENDMENT) RULES 1982, CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE (FIRST AMENDMENT) RULES, 1983.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, SPORTS AND WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI BUTA SINGH): On behalf of Shri P. Venkatasubbaiah, I beg to lay on the Table

(1) A copy of the Central Industrial Security Force (First Amendment) Rules 1983 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 195 in Gazette of India dated the 5th March, 1983, under sub-section (3) of section 22 of the Central Industrial Security Force Act, 1968.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT-6063/83]

(2) A copy of the Border Security Force (Amendment) Rules, 1982 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. 155(E) in Gazette of India dated the 2nd March, 1983 under section 141 of the Border Security Force Act, 1968.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT-6064/83]

(3) A copy of the Central Reserve Police Force (First Amendment) Rules, 1983 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 163 in Gazette of India dated the 26th February, 1983 issued under section 18 of the Central Reserve Police Force Act, 1949.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT-6065/83]

FINANCE ACCOUNTS OF UNION GOVERNMENT FOR 1980-81.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY): I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Finance Accounts of Union Government for the year 1980-81 (Hindi and English versions).

[Placed in Library. See No. LT-6066/83].

12.26 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

FIFTY-FIFTH REPORT

SHRI G. LAKSHMANAN (Madras North): I beg to present the Fifty-fifth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE REPORTED FAILURE TO SUPPLY RICE TO KERALA

SHRI A. NEELALOHITHADASAN NADAR (Trivandrum): I call the attention of the Minister of Food and Civil Supplies to the following matter of urgent public importance, and request that he may make a statement thereon:

"The reported failure of the Central Government to supply adequate quantity of rice to Kerala for distribution through public distribution system and the action taken by Government in the matter."

12.27 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER in the Chair].

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD): The State Governments|Union Territories intimate Central Government every month.

[Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad]

of their requirement of foodgrains from the Central Pool for issue through the Public Distribution System. The allotment of foodgrains to the various States/Union Territories, including Kerala, is made on a month-to-month basis, taking into account the availability of stocks in the Central Pool, the relative needs of the various States, the market availability and other related factors. These are being reviewed every month and allocations are made accordingly.

During the year 1982, the demand from Kerala was for 16.02 lakh tonnes of rice, out of which an allotment of 12.05 lakh tonnes was actually made from the Central Pool. This supply from the Central Pool is more or less equal to the normal total annual production of cereals in Kerala. The Central Government is conscious of the needs of Kerala and the fact that it is normally a deficit State, and has done its best to meet the demand to the greatest extent possible. The present monthly allotment of rice to Kerala is 95,000 tonnes and wheat 20,000 tonnes. Thus the total allocation of foodgrains to Kerala for the public distribution system has been kept at a high level of 1.15 lakh tonnes per month. Further, on a request from the State Government, we have permitted Kerala to purchase 15,000 tonnes of levy-free rice from non-consuming surplus States like Haryana and Punjab.

I would like to mention, in this connection, that the total procurement of foodgrains in the country which was about 152 lakh tonnes out of 1981-82 crop, though a record, represented only 12 1/2 % of the total production. In the case of rice, the procurement was 7.2 million tonnes which was only 13.2 per cent of the production. The needs of the deficit areas are met by the procurement made in the surplus areas. It would be appreciated that it is not possible to meet the entire rice requirements of the large segments of the population of our country with the foodgrains so procured. Issues made in the public distribution system are supplemental to the availability in the open market.

In spite of these limitations, Kerala has been receiving the second highest alloca-

tion of rice in the country, next only to West Bengal. The allocation of rice to Kerala has remained more or less the same even though the demand on the Central Pool stocks has increased greatly due to drought in many other States in the country during the present year.

I would like to point out, in this connection, that the management of the food economy has to be done by a joint effort of the Centre and the State. It is not merely a matter of demand by the State and supply by the Centre but one of a coordinated effort to procure and secure judicious public distribution in the context of the overall food situation in the country.

I can assure the Hon. Members that we are keenly alive to the food situation in Kerala as well as in other States, and are always striving to ensure equitable distribution of foodgrains to all needy States within the means at our disposal.

SHRI A. NEELALOHITHADASAN NADAR: As has been made clear in the statement of the Minister, Kerala is a deficit State in respect of rice and other foodgrains. But through you, I want to draw the attention of the Minister to the fact that Kerala has been producing rice, rubber, coconut and marine product and meeting the national need and earning foreign exchange also through this.

Sir, food problem has been one of the burning problems of Kerala for many years. I want to draw the attention of the whole House through you, that during the 'sixties there have been violent agitations even in the State due to shortage of food and the problems arising out of it. I even remember one instance in the 'sixties, that during a session of the AICC, that is, the ruling Party, the Congress the members were wearing a badge which said, 'Please supply rice to Kerala; we want rice for Kerala!' That is the background of the food problem in Kerala.

Now Kerala is facing drought also, in almost all the parts of the State. This has been brought to the notice of the Central Government by the State Government and also by various political Parties and the Members of Parliament from Kerala. On the 18th January, 1983 *The Patriot*

reported, "Kerala reels under drought." There were also earlier reports that Kerala was heading for a severe drought. There were many Press reports. But I am sorry to point out that the Central Government has not so far come forward to declare Kerala as a drought-affected State and render assistance to Kerala in meeting the drought situation. This food shortage and the food problem has been further aggravated because of this drought.

In the statement of the Minister, it is said in the second paragraph,—

"During the year 1982, the demand from Kerala was for 16.02 lakhs tonnes of rice, out of which an allotment of 12.05 lakh tonnes was actually made from the Central Pool."

As regard to the demand, the statement of the Minister is factually not correct. According to the Kerala Rationing Order, the allotment is 320 gms. of rice per adult per day, and half of it for a non-adult per day. The Central Government has to supply two lakh tonnes per month to be distributed through the public distribution system. That means, 24 lakh tonnes per year. But in the statement of the Minister it is said that the demand is only 16.02 lakh tonnes. That is not correct.

The State Government has made a demand for two lakh tonnes per month.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: That was their requirement.

SHRI A. NEELALOHITHADASAN NADAR: Two lakh tonnes in month, which means 24 lakh tonnes in a year. But never has the Government of India allotted as per this demand. But it has been allotting 1,35,000 tonnes per month. And it has been reduced to 90,000 tonnes in December, 1981. Even after repeated demands from the Government of Kerala, from various political parties and the Members of Parliament from Kerala, only 5,000 tonnes more have been allotted to Kerala as is made clear in the Minister's statement. 95,000 tonnes of rice is being allotted to Kerala as is made clear in the Minister's statement. But the situation in Kerala is

grave because of drought and other things. Besides this the Government of India has forced the Government of Kerala to raise the price of rice several times within the last 7 or 8 months. Arrival of rice in the open market has come to a standstill because of the restrictions imposed by the neighbour States like Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Except Mr. Nadar, nobody else will go on record.

SHRI A. NEELALOHITHADASAN NADAR: The private dealers who are having valid permits to import rice from other States, have also been harassed by the officials of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka Governments. There have been several such instances and those have been brought to the notice of the Central Government. Because of that, the position of availability of rice in the open market has further aggravated. The situation necessitates distribution of rice through ration shops in an adequate quantity.

There are also serious complaints regarding the quality of rice supplied through ration shops. The situation should be reviewed from two aspects. One is that Kerala should be allotted at least 1.35 lakh tonnes of rice per month to be supplied through ration shops i.e. less than 70 per cent of the actual requirement. The quality of rice should be better, preferably it should be boiled rice. The Kerala State Civil Supplies Corporation through the Government of Kerala has approached the Government of India for permission to purchase rice from surplus States like Andhra Pradesh. It has been clearly stated in the Minister's statement that the Government of India has allowed Kerala to purchase 15,000 tonnes of rice from surplus States like Punjab and Haryana. But the people of Kerala are in the habit of eating Andhra rice. There is the allegation that Punjab and Haryana rice is not of good quality and that it is not liked by the people of Kerala. So, only 15,000 tonnes of rice has been allowed to be purchased from other States. So, I request the Minister through you to allow the Kerala State Civil Supplies Corporation to purchase one lakh

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tonnes of rice if possible, from Andhra Pradesh itself at negotiated price.

Then there is the financial problem also. The Reserve Bank of India was providing credit facilities to the Kerala State Civil Supplies Corporation for the purchase of rice from the internal market at the price fixed by the Central Government. This restriction has to be relaxed by the Reserve Bank of India at the pressure of the Central Government to enable the State Government to purchase rice from the surplus States at negotiated price. I request the Minister and also the Finance Minister, through you to consider this point seriously and issue necessary directions to the Reserve Bank of India to enable the Kerala State Civil Supplies Corporation to avail of the credit facilities to purchase rice from the surplus States at negotiated price.

Similarly, the Central Government allots rice to Kerala on monthly basis but the distribution to the whole-salers and retailers is done on weekly basis. Some months are having four weeks and some are having five weeks. For the five-week months, the problems is that the whole-salers and retailers are unable to give rice to the card-holders as is being done in the four-week months. So my request through you to the minister is that the Government of India should either allot rice to the Kerala State on quarterly basis and give freedom to the State Government to adjust distribution within the quarter or raise 20 per cent of the allotment in a five-week month.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is only Calling Attention. I think you are not going to put any question?

SHRI A. NEELALOHITHADASAN NADAR: I want to ask the Minister whether the Government of India is ready to allot at least 1.35 lakh tonnes of rice as is being demanded at this critical moment taking into consideration the food situation of the entire country, at the earliest possible and whether the Government of India is ready to allow the Kerala State Civil Supplies Corporation to purchase at least one lakh tonnes of rice from Andhra Pradesh?

Talking about the food situation, as I have already pointed out, it is one of the burning problems and it had paved the way for violent agitations in Kerala in sixties. Now the situation is again like that. When this Government came into power in 1980, the price of rice in open market in Kerala was Rs. 2/- Rs. 2.25 and Rs. 2.50 per kilogram. Now after three years of their remaining in power, the price of rice in Kerala in the open market has increased to Rs. 6/- per kilogram. This is a serious situation. We consider India as one nation. Whenever there are forces, regional or parochial, which are affecting the integrity and unity of our country, the whole House and the whole country unitedly stood against such forces. We are against all such regional and parochial forces. So, in the case of rice and other essential commodities, it is a matter of regret that they are not allowing movement of rice from one place to another. So, I would urge upon the Government to allow free movement of rice throughout the country by lifting all restrictions and controls on the movement of rice. This was done during the Janata regime, as a result of which the price of rice in the open market came down and there was no scarcity of food at all. Now the scarcity is being created by the imposition of control by the Government on the movement of rice from one State to another. So, you should declare the whole of India as one food zone and allow free movement of rice from one place to another.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I fully appreciate the sentiments which the hon. Member has expressed about the country being one. We all view this problem from this point of view. It is truly on this basis that we are functioning, so far as the Central food pool is concerned. This pool consists of what we have procured from different States. There is no question of favouring one State or not favouring another.

There are two basic facts which have to be taken into consideration. Earlier, there was a Calling Attention about the food supply to Tamil Nadu. Now this is about Kerala. I notice that Prof. Chakraborti is

asking about Bengal, Shri Ramavatar Shastri about Bihar and Shri Panikha about UP. So, you can go on admitting Calling Attention about each State, if you like. . . (Interruptions) I want my friends to give me a patient hearing for two minutes.

I want to assure the hon. Members that I do not hide anything from them. They have as much right to know about the Central food pool, as I have as a Minister. The Central Government have got no land of their own to cultivate; they do not grow rice on the roof of some house. The Central pool consists of contribution by the surplus States. Therefore, the first point to be remembered is that the size of the Central pool depends upon the capacity of the surplus States, and also their willingness, to contribute to the pool. Now some of the States have shown willingness to contribute to the Central pool; but previously that was not the position. So, the Central pool depends upon the capacity and willingness of surplus States to procure and contribute to the pool.

Secondly, it must be remembered by the hon. Members that this procurement is only approximately 12-1/2 per cent of the total production in the country. Out of this 12-1/2 per cent, I have to allocate to the different States, according to their needs, according to their difficulties, and according to the availability in the market.

If the hon. Members bear in mind these two points, I am sure they would not blame me, saying that I have some hesitation in allotting quotas to any State. These are the two constraints within which the Central pool has to function. Therefore, it is not possible for the Central Government to allocate as much as the States want. One very important consideration may be kept in mind that it is a supplementary allocation-12-1/2 per cent. The Major contribution of 87-1/2 per cent has to come from the open market. Therefore, it is not possible for the Central Pool to allocate all the demands of the State Governments. Our hon. Members just now said that 12.05 lakh tonnes were allocated to Kerala. Please try to appreciate our difficulty. Last year the total demand by the State Government on the Central Pool was 250 lakh

tonnes. We had procured about 150 lakh tonnes for our Central Pool. The procurement was less by 100 lakh tonnes. it is not that we do not want to give. The limitation of the Central Pool stands in our way. The hon. Members may say—why can't you have more? If we procure the entire thing and then distribute, is that possible? That again is not possible.

SHRI K. A. RAJAN (Trichur): Why don't you take over the wholesale trade? (Interruptions).

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The facts are before the House. You may please listen to him.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: That entirely is a different question on which we have raised many a warring debate in this House and outside. We have sometimes partially experimented, sometimes to the near point experimented, but we have not yet succeeded. I hope the intelligent Members when they have the control, may try. For the present we have not been able to do so. What I say is quite simple—it was not possible for the Central Pool to allocate either last year or this year or in this month to any State

including Kerala to the extent that they wanted. The demand and the allocation has been as under:

(figures in lakh tonnes)

State	Demand	Allocation
Kerala	16.20	12.05
Andhra Pradesh	6.17	4.39
West Bengal	21.75	16.40
Madhya Pradesh	9.60	2.67
Assam	6.00	3.65
Bihar	6.80	3.80

It will be seen clearly that it is not possible for the Central Pool to give in full. As I told you the total demand was 250

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lakh tonnes but in my Central Pool the availability was 150 lakh tonnes. The demand to the extent of about 100 lakh tonnes had to be refused. It is not our unwillingness, nor that we do not sympathise, nor that we do not feel the pain of hunger. We have our constraint—the difficulties that I have placed before the House. (Interruptions).

SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN (Bada-goda): You have sympathy but no rice.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: We have rice and sympathy. Do not make a wrong statement. I am giving you 1.10 lakh tonnes. I have given 95,000 tonnes plus 15,000 tonnes to Kerala. This is the second largest allocation of rice to Kerala State. Therefore, you say rice and sympathy. Don't say 'only sympathy'.

The hon. Member has said that the State Government, different political parties, Members of Parliament from the State have represented. True. Not only Kerala has represented but all combined from different States have represented. Sir, I assure the hon. Member that it is not that we do not feel it. But as I said in the beginning, out of a procurement of 12-1/2 in the country, we have to make provision for everything including drought, including flood and including other difficulties, and we have given the highest quota of rice to West Bengal and Kerala because they have difficulties. But they should not complain that what they are not getting. Well, their complaint all the time is that they are demanding they are not getting. Every State makes that type of complaint.

Therefore, I may tell them, it is not true that we are not sympathetic; it is not true that we are not giving. We are giving the maximum that we can give. We want only to emphasise that it is only to supplement that we can give. We cannot give the entire requirements of the States that is not possible in any case, and I am not doing it in any State at all.

Now, I have got requests from West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Kerala etc., that they should be permitted to purchase one lakh tonne or so from the market, Sir, I have permitted West Bengal; I have permitted Tamil Nadu. The Central Government has permitted Kerala, Bihar and the other States. But now the question is they want the rice from Andhra Pradesh and not from Punjab as their taste differs. That choice is not possible.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: But Andhra is nearer to Kerala. That is the point.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: Firstly, I wanted to reply regarding the taste. After all, whatever you procure, you procure from the different markets in the country. That is what the Government does. Now, we have also to keep in mind the availability of surplus in different States. I have to take into consideration where I shall give the permission and where I shall have the least pushing up of the price in the market. There is a vast difference between purchase by the State Government and purchase by the private dealers. For every State Government, the Reserve Bank gives them credit. Regarding the question asked by the hon. Members, I will request them to direct that question to the Ministry of Finance. I cannot reply to it.

I am only saying what happens when the State Government is permitted to purchase.. whether it be West Bengal or Bihar or Kerala or Maharashtra. They are in the list of 'B' category in the Railways. They immediately purchase foodgrains and book it. They have got cash from the Reserve Bank. So, they come in a big way in the market. I shall have to keep in mind the market conditions and decide which market. I should allow them to purchase where I have got enough stocks and surplus and where their entry in the market will not push up the price. I have also to see the nodding head, the willingness of the concerned, State Governments. After all, we have to work with them. It is they who provide surplus. It is they who contribute to the deficit States. Therefore, Keeping in mind all these things, I allow rice from Punjab and Haryana. These are

very clear facts, I do not hide any thing from the house.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, one thing for my information. Why can't you allow the private merchants to purchase rice from some other State and deal in their respective State, and not the Government?

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: Again, I would request the House to keep this in mind that I am only operating the 12-1/2 per cent of productions. This point should be kept in mind. Private trade does come into the picture. But the question is that it is an operation of 12-1/2 per cent by the Government and the rest by the private traders in the country. Sir, by allowing somebody to come in, the price in the market goes up. So, when my friend tells me, "Give me quarterly", I will say, "My friend, it is not possible". Why? Because, you are asking from a man who has got a limited stock with him. Therefore every month, he sees the availability in the market, he sees the price and he sees the Central 13.00 hrs.

pool position. I could give you figures for the last few years how the Central pool is giving more off-take and whether it is coming down.

We have a drought in the country. The rice production in the country might suffer. We will try to manage still. But you should keep in mind that this year there is a widely spread drought, in many parts of the country. Last year, there was one State affected. We gave it very liberally. This time, I have to take the entire country into account and I have to keep all the 12 months in view. Every month, before allotting, I have to see how much I have, what is the total demand of the State, etc. etc. Therefore, these are the difficulties.

We are giving to Kerala the maximum that we can do, that is, 95000 tonnes of rice plus 20000 tones of wheat for public distribution. This is the maximum we can give. All State Governments have to manage some quantity from their side also. For that, I have permitted Kerala to purchase from the open market.

These are the important facts that should be taken into consideration for any demand that I get from different States for allotment.

SHRI A. NEELALOHITHADASAN NADAR: My main question is not answered. Please allow the movement of rice from one State to another.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: I have already replied to his question. That reply is that, normally, I have not put any hindrance on the movement. But the question is that for the entire country, the total production of rice is the same out of which State Governments procure and give me, out of which some quantities are procured by the private merchants and they are gone through. Therefore, there is nothing like formal or otherwise restriction on the movement in the country. But as I have said, because of this, the State Governments have to contribute to the Central pool and they have to look to other things also. I have not put any restriction.

SHRI A. NEELACHITHADASAN NADAR: Are you ready to declare free movement in the whole country?

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: There is nothing like declaring. It is there. Why declare? I am saying, yes, I have put no restriction on that.

SHRI A. K. BALAN (Ottapalam): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, it is a very important Calling Attention...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is why the Speaker has allowed it.

SHRI A. K. BALAN: The reply of the hon. Minister concerned is not convincing. The main problem is that the State Government of Kerala is not in a position to convince the Central Government about the real position of the grievous situation arising in Kerala. Our Chief Minister, Mr. Karunakaran, is very much concerned with some other things, like, elephants, temples etc. etc. He is not at all concerned with the people's problem. That is the main trouble.

I am going to read a letter written by the Chief Minister of Kerala Mr. Karunakaran, of 2nd December, 1982...

AN HON. MEMBER: A love letter.

SHRI A. K. BALAN: Not a love letter. It is a letter stating the facts that a serious situation has arisen in Kerala.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can give a gist of it.

SHRI A. K. BALAN: There is an acute scarcity of foodgrains in Kerala. Please bear with me; be patient. I will take 5 to 7 minutes only. Then, I will ask certain questions. It is a very important issue.

The Chief Minister of Kerala, Mr. Karunakaran, addressed a letter to Rao Birendra Singh, the Union Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development on 2nd December, 1982....

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You change the name as "Mr. Bhagwat Jha Azad."

SHRI A. K. BALAN: In his letter, he has stated that the following:

"The Civil Supplies Corporation, however, is not able to enter into any formal contract with the supplier from surplus State in view of the directive issued by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. The Civil Supplies Corporation cannot purchase and move rice from other States except with the prior approval of the Government."

Then, again, he has stated:

"We are afraid the food situation in Kerala would go out of control and there will be panic among the general public with the consequent problems for the Government in terms of social upheaval, law and order situation, etc."

"I shall, therefore, be grateful if you kindly arrange to issue formal orders, permitting the Kerala State Civil Supplies Corporation to purchase rice to the extent of one lakh tonnes from surplus States like Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, U.P. and Karnataka."

I would like to know what action has been taken by the Central Government in response to this letter. This letter reveals the real problems of the people.

Law and order situation might deteriorate at this juncture, the Central Government should therefore take firm decision regarding this.

I have gone through the Minister's written reply but his reply is inconsistent with the Calling Attention.

I can give my reaction. The allocation of rice to Kerala is decreasing. According to the scale of ration prevailing in Kerala, the monthly requirement of rice for the public distribution system is about 2 lakh tonnes.

In 1980, the Central Government had agreed to give 1,35,000 tonnes of rice per month.

In 1981 again, the Central Government gave 1,35,000 tonnes of rice pre month except in December only. In December, we get 90,000 tonnes only.

In 1982 (January-April), we got 90,000 tonnes. In October 1,10,000 tonnes, November, 90,000 tonnes only. December 95,000 tonnes.

In 1983 (January-February) we got 95,000 tonnes. This is the only allocation.

We want really 2 lakh tonnes.

You may be aware that Kerala is the only State which has started rationing system. The Central Government is bound to give sufficient foodstuffs. In this connection, I would like to ask whether the Government is ready to give each and every month 1,35,000 tonnes of rice to Kerala? I would like to have a categorical reply.

Then again, my next question is, will the Centre at least rush 30,000 tonnes of rice immediately on an *ad-hoc* basis so that the black-market prices will come down.

Secondly, will the Centre give an assurance that from next month onwards, it will provide the agreed quota?

I wish to add that if you give us an assurance of rushing foodgrains to Kerala,

the moment the news reaches the State, the market price would come down. This is the main question I have to ask for which I have to get a categorical and specific answer.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Your questions are categorical. And he will give for a categorical reply. You have done very well. In Calling attention you have done very well.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: I appreciate the Hon. Member asking me rather than going round and round and merry-round to which I have replied previously. I have to reply again. As far as possible, I will again try to reply.

I would very much like to give Kerala one lakh tonnes of rice every month. I would like it. But I have explained in detail, in reply to the previous Hon. Member, that it is not possible for me to do that. I have given a detailed answer that what I am distributing is what I am getting from different States in the Central Pool. The Central Pool consists of procurement of only a very small percentage, that is, 12-1/2 per cent, sometimes it is less and sometimes it is a little more, and I have to look, as the hon. member said very rightly, to all the States who are the members of the entire nation. The hon. Member has quoted the monthly figures. I am happy he knows about the position. It is true that the allocations to Kerala was 110 thousand tonnes of rice till October, 1982 it came down to 90 thousand in November and to 95000 in December and from there the hon. Member will find that, whereas in the case of the other States it has gone down and up from December in the case of Kerala level of 95,000 tonnes of rice had been kept unchanged because we know the difficulties of the State of Kerala. Therefore, I would say that it is not possible to give one lakh tonnes per month, nor is it possible to give 50,000 tonnes *ad hoc*. He has asked whether it is possible from the next month. What I want the hon. Member to realise is this. Every month I get demands from different States and, as I told you, the demands are much larger than our

capacity. For example. I would like to emphasize again, the demand of all the State Governments put together was 25 million tonnes last year and I had only 15 million tonnes with me, and that, I think, we managed all right. In spite of all this, the State Governments and the people have to manage; they possibly also suffer sometimes, but somehow we are managing the entire country in the difficult times.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, you can supply a list of demand and supply in respect of the various States this year. That can be useful.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: That is there with me, I will do that. No problem.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Not now. You can supply—the demands of the various States and Supplies made to them.

SHRI BHAGAT JHA AZAD: Yes; what was their demand last year, what was the allocation and what was the off-take by them, State-wise; no problem.

To the second point, I would say 'no': this is not correct. There is no statutory rationing in Kerala. A whole State cannot be put under statutory rationing. Never was it done any where. It cannot be cordoned off. Rationing means a particular area is completely cordoned off, nothing is allowed to come in or allowed to go out, and the Government takes over the responsibility to give the requisite quantum to everybody. That is not the case in Kerala. There is no statutory rationing in that State. There are private markets functioning; there is no restriction. I would like to emphasize again that we are giving the maximum to the State of Kerala. They have their difficulties, but our difficulties they have also to share. It is not a question of State demanding and the Centre giving. It is a question of coordinated efforts of procuring by them and whatever is procured, from out of that kitty, judicious distribution. Within our limitations and our wisdom we are trying our best to give as much consideration as possible to the different States.

SHRI A. K. BALAN: One question. I want to know the response of the hon. Minister to the letter written by our Chief Minister, Shri Karunakaran. Prior sanction of the Central Government is necessary for a surplus State to give the surplus rice to Kerala. I want to know whether the Government is ready to give that sanction.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: Letters do come to me; not only letters, I had a talk with Mr. Karunakaran on telephone when he wanted my permission. If I cannot help, at least in the other way for giving permission to purchase rice, I should help. I did give it. I do get letters from different Chief Ministers, I do get telephone calls from different Chief Ministers, I do meet them. Even today I am meeting two Chief Ministers for this purpose. But writing of letter does not increase production of rice. What can I do? (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Lawrence.

SHRI M. M. LAWRENCE: (Idukki): Sir, monsoon is approaching. Normally in Kerala this monsoon period is considered the starvation period. Even starvation deaths have taken place previously in our State during this period. In Malayalam it is called as *Panja Matham*. In that situation, as has been explained by my colleague here, there is scarcity and the public distribution system has crumpled because of the irresponsibility of the Central Government—the irresponsibility.

Now the Minister himself has stated that he is not prepared to procure sufficient quantity of rice from surplus States. He is saying that he is unable to procure without the consent of the concerned State Government.

We are against a single zone of the nation. I am for a single State zone. It is the responsibility of the Government to see that sufficient rice is being given to the deficit States so that they can feed the people of the State.

Kerala is a deficit State. We are not cultivating enough rice. What we are

cultivating is enough only for our five months' requirements. But we are producing such valuable cash crops which are being exported to foreign countries and the country gets so much valuable foreign exchange. Lakhs of our Kerala people have gone to foreign countries and they are labouring there, earn and remit to the country millions of dollars. But the Government of India is not giving any regard for this earning.

Unemployment is very high in Kerala — when compared to other States, perhaps it may be the highest State in regard to unemployment. Our traditional industries are crumpling—coir industry, cashew industry and handloom industry, etc. and lakhs of workers engaged in these industries are getting a very few days of work in a year. So their earning is very low. Now, what is the approach of the Government?

Now, the Minister in his statement has stated:

“Issues made in the public distribution system are supplemental to the availability in the open market.”

But it should not be so. What I am saying is that it should be to keep down the prices in the open market. You may be able to keep down the prices in the open market, if only you can give the full ration to the ration shops. But what the hon. Minister is saying is that it is only supplemental to the open market. We can get enough rice from the open market provided we have got enough money.

The question is that majority of the people in the Kerala State have not got the purchasing capacity. Not only in Kerala but in the whole of the country, the downtrodden and the working class and even the middle class people are losing their purchasing capacity and more so in Kerala as there is acute unemployment. If they want to purchase food for their livelihood, they have to spend more, but they have not enough income for that. In the last two to three decades, this public distribution system was maintained in Kerala. As compared to the

other States in India it is a pucca system in our State. Without the help of the Central Government, statutory rationing cannot be maintained.

On that score, Government is not willing to come forward to procure from the other surplus States and to give the agreed allotment to the Kerala State. The Hon. Minister now says that Government of Andhra is not allowing to procure more. I think that is not correct. It is a wrong statement. They have never said that they are against procuring or purchasing from there. But, Government is not willing to purchase from there. When there is scarcity in the matter of rice in the country, it is the responsibility of the Government which is ruling this country, if they are interested in the existence of the common people, to procure the rice from wherever it is available. But that is not being done.

(Interruptions)

So, the first thing to be done is to take over the wholesale trade in foodgrains. My question is — is the Government prepared to take over the wholesale trade in rice as well as in wheat?

In the statement, it has been stated that they allow the State Governments to purchase from outside. I want to know which are the State Governments that were allowed to purchase from outside the State and how much quantity have they purchased in 1982-83? Our Ministers, even our Prime Minister and the ruling party top leaders claim that they have achieved green revolution and white revolution. They have said that after these two revolutions, they are going to achieve two-wheeler revolution. In my opinion, the only revolution which they have achieved is a tall-talk revolution.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: That everyone of us is doing.

SHRI M. M. LAWRENCE: Government of India is doing that; their representatives are doing that. Instead of tall-talk revolution, they can try to do something to give food for the people.

So, I request the hon. Minister, to reply to my questions as to whether he is prepared to procure enough of rice from the available markets in different States and also to take over the wholesale trade of rice as well as wheat and to give the fully allotted quota of rice to the State of Kerala.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: Sir, I have already explained and replied to almost all parts of his question very comprehensively. But, since they are put in different forms, I shall have to reply them in a different language. That is all. I have said that there is no unwillingness on the part of the Central Government to help the States. Why should there be any? There is no differentiation between this State and that State. Rather if there is any discrimination or any favour it is for the State of Kerala where we are trying to accommodate to the maximum. The point of the hon. Member is that we should procure more. We are procuring as much as possible with the consent and the help of the State Governments. After all it is not a question of any State. They have their own demand. They have their own requirements. We request them and we try to procure as much as possible. Whatever we can procure by our maximum effort we do that and we try to judiciously distribute to the States in time of difficulty. I think, Sir, difficulties are there but the question is that there are States in this country which are purely rice-eating States, for example, Bihar... (Interruptions) Please try to listen me. Any amount of passion created here will not increase the availability of rice in the Central pool... (Interruptions).

Sir, I have replied to the points already. I have said we are giving maximum to the State of Kerala. It is 95,000 tonnes. I have given the maximum to the State of Kerala and beyond... (Interruptions) It is a national project that we are doing. If the members do not want to hear me I have done my duty.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record without my permission. We go to the next item—Shri Buta Singh.