

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: The hon. Minister has given reply to a very *** question from a very big man....(Interruptions).

AN HON. MEMBER: It should be expunged.

MR. SPEAKER: The expression is unparliamentary. You can put a question, not make an insinuation.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: Let me put a question. (Interruption).

MR. SPEAKER: You can come out with a very constructive supplementary. That is what I want.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: He has stated that the Food for Work Programme was used even to repair private tanks and for removing sand from the fields of private land owners. As you know, there were heavy floods in West Bengal in 1978 and entire districts were devastated. Sand covered lakhs and lakhs of acres of land, and sand and flood do not follow the directives of the Central Government. In a devastating situation like that, when lakhs and takhs of acres of land are covered by sand is it wrong on the part of the State Government to remove the sand, so that food can be produced?

PROOF. K. K. TEWARY: He is in the habit of making such remarks. He must apologise for that.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: Removal of sand from private owners' fields may be necessary in view of the State Government's policy of helping the farmers, but the Food for Work Programme does not entitle the State Government to go against the guidelines laid down, and this was contrary to the instructions given by the Central Government for utilisation of the Food for Work assistance.

SHRI PIUS TIRKEY: The State Trading Corporation is adding to the trouble because of slow supply of

essential commodities like sugar, edible oils etc. May I know from the hon. Minister what steps have been taken to streamline the public distribution system in the modified ration shops in West Bengal?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: The question relates to the Department of Civil Supplies and so, the hon. Member may put a separate question.

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: The Minister has categorically stated that the funds or the foodgrains supplied to the Government of West Bengal had been misused. I would like to know, what method the Minister is going to adopt to recover the money from the Government of West Bengal.

MR. SPEAKER: Next Question.

Lack of Foodgrains for Food-for-work Programme in West Bengal

*109. **SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY:** Will the Minister of RURAL RECONSTRUCTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Food-for-Work Programme in West Bengal has been suffering because of lack of adequate supply of foodgrains from the Centre; and

(b) if so, this measures taken to release the requested quota of foodgrains for the programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) and (b). No, Sir. A total quantity of about 2.45 lakh MT. of foodgrains was available with Government of West Bengal during the year 1979-80. Out of this, the State Government have reported utilisation so far of 1.23 lakh MT. only. As such, the State Government have a substantial quantity of foodgrains with them.

In addition, a further quantity of 20,000 MT of foodgrains has been released to the State Government during 1980-81.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: The hon. Minister has stated that 2.45 lakh MT of foodgrains have been given to West Bengal Government, out of which, only for 1.23 lakh MT, the utilisation certificate has been received. Only in his reply to the previous Question, the Minister has stated that the State Government had actually made use of the entire thing available with it. In view of this, I would like to know whether the replies given are contradictory or not. Since the utilisation certificate has been received only for 50 per cent, is it the inference that the whole thing has not been used?

SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN: The quantity of foodgrains that was available with the Government of West Bengal was 2.45 lakh MT and they have availed of 1.23 lakh MT out of the stock they had.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: What is the actual quantity used by them? I am not asking about the quantity for which the utilisation certificate has been given. I would like to know whether in the case of other State Governments also, the Central Government behaves in the same fashion. Do you demand utilisation certificate from them and is it the practice that only after getting that, you give the grants?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO): As I have already stated, our practice is, we only calculate the quantity of foodgrains utilised on the basis of utilisation certificate received from the States and that is only to the extent of 50 per cent so far in the case of West Bengal, out of 2.45 lakh MT. When I visited West Bengal, I was told by the West Bengal Government Officers that they had exhausted

all their foodgrains. This was their statement. They also said that the food for work programme had come to a stand still. There was a serious drought in some of the districts and on humanitarian grounds, they asked the Centre to release some more foodgrains and on this request of theirs, a further quantity of 20,000 MT was released as a special case, in spite of the fact that this is not in accordance with our practice that we follow in respect of other States. So far as we know, only 50 per cent had been utilised, since the utilisaion certificate has been received only for that. We shall release further quantity of foodgrains so that the work in West Bengal continues.

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: I would like to clarify one thing. He has stated...

MR SPEAKER: You can put only a supplementary question. There is no question of clarification.

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Out of the allotment of 2.45 lakh MT, we had obtained only 1.64 lakh tonnes. Out of this, for 1.35 lakh MT, they have given utilisation certificate.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Mukherjee, you can only ask a question.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I have to point out to you that you can only ask question. You cannot explain. You ask a straight question.

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: The State Government has got actually only 1.64 lakh MT. They have given utilisation report for more than 80 per cent of this quantity.

MR. SPEAKER: What is the supplementary?

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: My supplementary is, the Minister stated that they have given an account of less than 50 per cent of the stock allotted to them....

MR. SPEAKER: So, what is your question?

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: My question is, whatever quantity they have received, they have submitted utilisation certificate to the extent of more than 80 per cent and they are, accordingly, entitled to get foodgrains to that extent. Whether it is correct or not?

MR. SPEAKER: He has already answered that. Mr. Sanjay Gandhi.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: I am entitled to two supplementaries. I have put only one.

MR. SPEAKER: I will give you another chance later.

SHRI SANJAY GANDHI: In view of the known corruption and misuse by the CPM Government in the use of foodgrains for the "food for work" programme, will the Central Government take any steps to see that further corruption and misuse does not take place?

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: It is an insinuation. (*Interruption*).

SHRI SANJAY GANDHI: It is not at all an insinuation.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: I have stated the irregularities that have been detected. The Central Government's effort, in the first instance, is to persuade the State Government of West Bengal to see reason and then we shall decide. If they still continue with mal-practice, then we shall have to decide on some other action.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: My pinpointed question to the hon. Minister is this. He has stated that 2.45 lakh tonnes of foodgrains have been allotted. What is the actual amount of foodgrains that has reached the hands of the State Government of West Bengal out of 2.45 lakh tonnes?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: The total quantity of foodgrains released for "food for work" programme is placed at the disposal of the State Government. They could draw on it any time they like. There is enough stock of foodgrains in West Bengal. Therefore, there could not be any difficulty of non-supply of foodgrains on this account. It is presumed, therefore, that all the quantity has been drawn from it.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY: Though I am not provoked by Mr. Sanjay Gandhi because he speaks as a part of party propaganda, I want to ask the hon. Minister pointedly as to why he was stating something about West Bengal, particularly, about the misuse of funds and all that? Before telling all these things, is it not expected of the hon. Minister that he should first get these things substantiated and then only say all that? Does it not otherwise become a part of party propaganda?

MR. SPEAKER: It is disallowed because the hon. Minister was telling from the findings of the inquiry.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Will the hon. Minister kindly give a specific reply to my pointed question as to what was the amount of foodgrains that was allotted, what was the amount of foodgrains that was actually received by the State Government of West Bengal and how much of it has been accounted for so far.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: It has already been stated repeatedly that 2.45 lakh tonnes were released for "food for work" programme and this entire quantity is at the disposal of the State Government.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: How much actually received is the question.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: Because there is enough foodgrains stock in the State....

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: He is evading. How much actually received by the State Government of West Bengal?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: As stated by the West Bengal Government itself, the entire quantity of foodgrains has been taken by the State Government and even where there is no food stock with the FCI, we have allowed. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: One question was how much...

MR. SPEAKER: No, he has already replied. You can put another question.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: I will do that.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: First of all, before putting my question, I want to point out that he cannot say, 'Malpractice' of the West Bengal Government because the finding has not yet come to the Central Government. You know that at the time of the severe flood and at the time of this Year's severe drought, not a single person has died in West Bengal. It is known to the country and to everyone that at the time of the flood.

MR. KRISHNA: No, no, you are not putting any question. Please put your question.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: I am putting the question. Is it not a fact that, in spite of the meagre quantity of food supplied to the State Government, the State Government efficiently fought the severe drought in West Bengal and so the question of 'malpractice' in West Bengal does not arise?

MR. SPEAKER: It is not a question.

PROF. K. K. TEWARY: Is it not a fact that vast tracts of land belonging to some CPM leaders have been reclaimed with the wheat provided by the Central Government to the West Bengal Government?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: I would not be able to go into the specific complaints. This is generally the report of the Team that visited West Bengal for enquiry, and I mentioned a few facts. If the Hon. Members resent the words 'malpractices' and 'irregularities'—in my opinion these could be the only words to be used where there is breach of the conditions laid down for a particular programme—and if there is any softer word, they can suggest, I do not mind substituting it. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: May I know why in spite of the fact that 2.45 lakhs tons was placed at the disposal of the State Government and it was left to their sweet will when to draw upon it for the work, that Government did not draw it and utilise the scheme and allowed the Food For Work programme to suffer? Did the Central Government find out what are the reasons? Is it because of administrative reasons or other reasons?

MR. SPEAKER: He has already replied.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: I want an answer to my question.

MR. SPEAKER: He has already done it, I think.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD: No, he has not.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: I have stated already that the entire quantity is presumed to have been withdrawn by the West Bengal Government and it is supposed to be with them. They have utilised it, as they say, but we have not received the utilisation certificate. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK: Is the Hon. Minister aware that in the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, which makes the allotment to the States and to FCI, the normal delay in delivery spreads over three months and that,

between the allotment and release order given to the FCI and the railway movement or truck movement, the disastrous difference of time is nearly two to three months? Is the Minister aware of this fact?

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: The hon. Member probably could not follow me. As soon as the release order...

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK: I have followed clearly. Please answer my question.

SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO: There is no relation between release of foodgrains meant for the Food-For-Work Programme and the movement of foodgrains to a State. As soon as a quantity is released for this Programme, the State Government can immediately go to any FCI godown and get the quantity released on their orders, district-wise. Even if there is no stock with the FCI, if the State Government has some stock with it, they can utilise that stock also for this Programme and then it is replenished.

MR. SPEAKER: Next Question.

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK: The Minister has not answered my question.

MR. SPEAKER: Next Question. Mr. Ram Gopal Reddy.

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK: The Minister must not be under mis-conception of facts. When there is a heavy drought and famine condition in a State or a flood condition in a State like West Bengal or Orissa.

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. I have gone to the next Question.

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK: It is very unfair.

MR. SPEAKER: Not at all.

Complaints about misuse of S.T.D. Facility

*110. **SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY:** Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of complaints have been received by P.&T. Department from telephone subscribers regarding misuse of STD dialling facility by unscrupulous persons; and

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KARTIK ORAON):

(a) Yes, Sir. Complaints of this nature have been received. In many cases investigations showed that there was no spurt in the meter reading and no unauthorised connection was detected. In a few cases unauthorised connections were detected and action initiated against the persons found involved in the foul practice.

(b) (i) Action to amend the Indian Telegraph Act, to make unauthorised diversion of line a major offence, is in progress.

(ii) Vigilance Squads have been formed in Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Delhi Telephone Districts to make surprise checks for detecting any misuse.

(iii) Charge analysers are being imported to detect such cases more easily.

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: Sir, some unauthorised connections were detected. I want to know what specific steps have been taken by the Government.