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HOUSE OF THE PEOPLE

Monday, 24th November, 1952.

The House met at a Quarter to Eleven
of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(See Part I)

11-45 A.M.

STATEMENT RE PROCUREMENT
AND DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD-
GRAINS IN WEST BENGAL AND
MYSORE.

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): (Certain changes in the present systems of procurement and distribution of foodgrains in West Bengal and Mysore have been under the consideration of these two Governments and the Centre. A decision has been taken and the changes will be as follows:

In West Bengal, the present system of procurement will be replaced by a system chiefly of (1) a levy on all holdings of ten acres and more, and (2) a levy on rice millers, outside the Calcutta Industrial Area to the extent of 1/3rd of all purchases made by such mills. The present inter-district cordons will be removed, and foodgrains within the State can move freely, except into the statutorily rationed areas.

On the distribution side statutory rationing will be confined to the Calcutta Industrial Area and the towns of Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong. In other places fair-price shops according to necessity will be run. The Centre has taken the responsibility of feeding the Calcutta Industrial Area. In addition to the ration of rice issued from the regular ration shops, the present system of a supplementary rice ration at a higher price from special shops will continue. It has also been decided

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that with effect from the 1st of January 1953, the rice ration from the regular ration shops will be raised from the present scale of 4½ oz to six oz. The West Bengal Government have undertaken to supply the quantity necessary to raise the rice ration from 4½ oz to six oz; and the increased scale will be maintained as long as the West Bengal Government are able to provide this extra quantity.

Anti-hoarding measures will be enforced, and steps to stop smuggling of rice into the Calcutta area will be intensified. When the responsibility for feeding Calcutta is taken on by the Centre, the rest of the State becomes surplus in rice, and West Bengal Government have agreed to make available to the Centre 1½ lakh tons of rice in addition to the quantity necessary to raise the rice ration in Calcutta from 4½ oz to six oz.

In Mysore, the present system of procurement of rice will continue except that the levy on rice will be based on an average of quantities delivered in previous years, by each producer. There will be no procurement of millets.

On the distribution side, statutory rationing will be confined to the cities of Bangalore, Kolar Gold Field and Devengere.

After the levy of rice has been collected, the Mysore Government propose to relax restrictions on movement, and withdraw the fair price shops gradually. Such fair price shops will however, be run whenever scarcity arises.

Shri K. K. Basu (Diamond Harbour): Sir, on a point of information...

Mr. Speaker: It is only another form of putting a question on the statement made by the Minister. He may get the information from the hon. Minister outside and not by way of asking for the information in the House.