

**Shri Nath Pal:** I won't quarrel with your explanation. The Chief Justice knew it better when he said it.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The hon Member is entitled to that opinion, that the Chief Justice knew it better, and when the Law Minister says that about the facts that he has got and puts forward his opinion, there is no harm. I suppose that no reflection has been cast.

As regards these cut motions, may I know if any cut motion is desired to be put to vote or all these cut motions are being withdrawn by leave of the House?—I take it that all cut motions are being withdrawn by leave of the House

*The Cut Motions were, by leave withdrawn*

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The question is—

“That the respective sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the fourth column of the order paper, be granted to the President, to complete the sums necessary to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March 1960, in respect of the heads of demands entered in the second column thereof against Demands Nos 70 and 71 relating to the Ministry of Law”

*The motion was adopted*

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Now, would hon. Members like to start discussion on the Home Ministry's Demands or proceed with the half-hour discussion, so that the Demands of the Home Ministry are taken up tomorrow?

**Some Hon. Members:** Tomorrow

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Then we shall proceed with the half-hour discussion.

\*Half-an-hour discussion.

17.22 hrs.

**\*PRICES OF PADDY IN MADHYA PRADESH**

**Shri Supakar (Sambalpur):** Before I make a reference to the Starred Question No. 731, I want to make a very brief reference to the background of the situation

You know that in the month of November 1958, the National Development Council took a decision that the State would now go in for State-trading. That was widely publicised throughout the country, just before the harvesting time. After harvest, the cultivator has to sell his paddy and rice. But strangely enough, no precautionary measure was taken to see that this does not create any scare in the minds of the public. When a question about State trading in food-grains was discussed in the House on 12th March, 1959, the Government told us that they were not ready with a full scheme. At that time, apprehension was expressed by some of the Members in the form of a question I will particularly refer first of all to a question by Dr Ram Subhag Singh

“The scheme was announced in November 1958, and the hon. Minister himself admitted just now that the most effective way of controlling the prices is the prompt finalisation of this scheme. Assuming that he knows all these things, may I know why the finalisation of the scheme is being kept in abeyance?”

The Government's answer was that the time-lag was due to the paper being prepared and being circulated among the States, their opinions being received; he said then the Cabinet would take a decision and the matter would then be put before the House. By the time the matter comes before the House, the necessity of protecting the interest either of the purchaser or of the producer will, I believe, have gone; by that time, I believe, the next sowing season will have commenced.

[Shri Supakar]

At that time, Shri Thirumala Rao expressed the apprehension that in the mean time the grains would have gone underground, that is, by the time the Government came to a decision That apprehension has been realised and today the position is this. The Government of India says that it does not take any responsibility for the procurement of paddy but it takes responsibility for the procurement of rice from the States of Madhya Pradesh and Orissa and others.

There was a specific question put on 12th March, 1959 by Shri Khadiwala and Shri K. B. Malavia:

"Whether it is a fact that in Madhya Pradesh cash payments are not made to the peasants while purchasing rice as a result of which peasants are compelled to sell their rice for cash payment to the merchants at lower prices; and whether it is also a fact that paddy and rice purchased at lower prices on cash payment are sold by the merchants at the Government at higher prices?"

The Government conveniently evaded answering the question saying that the responsibility for purchasing paddy rests with the Government and spoke nothing about the responsibility for purchasing rice.

In the meantime there was some agitation in the State and there was a conference between the representative of the Government of India and the representative of the State—I believe the Commissioner of the Division—from which I know that out of 28,000 tons of rice purchased on behalf of the Government of India at a price of about Rs. 1 crore and odd, though the rule is that the producer must be paid within 24 hours of the giving of rice, the Government of India had paid only Rs 45 lakhs, though they had purchased rice worth over one crore. The consequence of such a transaction is that the cultivator who has to pay his rent which falls due in M.P. by the 15th of December each year has to pay his rent and purchase

other things as soon as the harvest is over. He has to bring the rice or paddy to the centre. When he finds that the Government agent is not in a position to pay the price, he cannot go back to his own village and come again. Therefore, he has to undersell the rice to the middleman. I am told very reliably that now rice is being sold at Rs. 9 per maund, as we know also from the question which was put by Shri Shukla himself—it was Question No. 731—paddy is selling at the rate of Rs. 4 or Rs. 5.

On account of these facts questions are put to focus the attention of the Government to the difficulties experienced by the cultivators. But, unfortunately, Government pays no heed. Consequently, the cultivators who had bumper harvests this year and who had expected some return for their labour were practically cheated by the middlemen; and also the purchaser who expected that because there was a bumper crop he would get rice and paddy at cheap rates is disappointed. So, the Government's responsibility is not discharged.

I learn from newspaper reports that there was an agitation among the cultivators in M.P. in the Chattisgarh, Drug and Rayagarh area and by the 12th March, 1959 as many as 800 persons were arrested. It is a sorry state of affairs. The Government gives certain hopes and promises certain things but it does not keep them and it is not able to fulfil those promises. As a consequence the agriculturists not only suffer but they are forced to take recourse to agitation and many persons are arrested. I do not know when the Government will be ready with the scheme for State-trading perhaps when necessities for State-trading might have vanished. Probably when the next season comes, we might have some drought or flood or something and then the agriculturist may find that he is in the same position in the next year as in this year, the only difference being that he has to blame the Government for this year's catastrophic results. I have

nothing more to say. I believe what is happening in Madhya Pradesh is also happening in Orissa and that is why I tabled this half-an-hour discussion. I believe that some of my friends from Madhya Pradesh will bear me out in this matter.

सरकार अ० सि० सूर्यल (जंजगीर) :  
उपाध्यक्ष जी, मेरे मित्र ने कहा है कि रायपुर और हुम में करीब ८०० आदमी गिरफ्तार हुए हैं। मैं उनसे जानना चाहूंगा कि वहाँ पर जो एजीटेशन शुरू किया गया है वह किस की ओर से किया गया है। मुझे मालूम है कि हमारा बिलासपुर जिला सरप्लस जिला है और हम वहाँ से जितना अनाज भेज सकते हैं भेज रहे हैं। वहाँ में अरुण मानता हूँ कि हमको जितनी तादाद में चावल खरीदना चाहिए वह हम नहीं खरीद पाये हैं। इस सम्बन्ध में मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि धान का भाव निर्धारित करने से पहले हमको यह देख लेना चाहिए था कि काश्तकार का इस पर कितना बर्बा आता है और उसके बाद ही भाव निर्धारित करना चाहिए था। हमको काश्तकार की धामदनी का ध्यान रख कर भाव निश्चित करना चाहिए था लेकिन यह नहीं किया गया।

इसके अलावा मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि हमारे चन्द प्रोद्युसर अपना माल नाकर व्यापारियों को बेच रहे हैं क्योंकि हमारी खरीदने की व्यवस्था ठीक नहीं है और इससे मिडिलमैन को लाभ हो रहा है। इस बारे में मैं अपने मित्र से सहमत हूँ।

लेकिन अब जो हो गया सो तो हो गया। आशुन्दा हमको यह करना चाहिये कि जो गल्ता पैदा होता है उसके खर्च का तत्कालीन कर और उसके बाद किसान का लाभ रखते हुये कीमत निर्धारित करे। आज जो एजी-टेशन ही रहा है उसका कारण गवर्नमेंट की कुछ कमजोरियाँ हैं। इसका मुख्य कारण यह हो सकता है कि हम लोगों में जो भाव निर्धारित किया उस वक्त जो काम करने वाले लोग हैं उनके ठीक तरह से नहीं लगता

गया। आज तो मैं देखता हूँ कि बिलासपुर में बहुत गल्ता खरीदा जा रहा है। छत्तीसगढ़ में कितना खरीदा जाता है यह मैं नहीं कह सकता। लेकिन काफी तादाद में हमारे यहाँ से गल्ता भेजा जा रहा है। मुझे रीजनल सुपरिटेण्डेंट, बिलासपुर से मालूम हुआ कि रायगढ़ जिले को जो बैगन दिये गये थे वे ठीक तरह से भरे नहीं जा सके। मैं समझता हूँ कि किमी भी सरकार का कर्तव्य है कि अगर उसके पास स्टॉक है तो उसको जल्दी भर कर भेज देना चाहिये। लेकिन इन सम्बन्ध में मैं यह फिर कहना चाहता हूँ कि हमारे किसानों को जो भाव मिलना चाहिये था वह नहीं मिला है।

अब हमारे यहाँ स्केयरसिटी होती है उस वक्त के रिकार्ड को देखा जाये तो आपको मालूम होगा कि बिलासपुर सरप्लस रहता है। लेकिन मेरा सुझाव है कि हमारे जिले से गल्ता खरीदने में सरकार को खरीदने की ठीक व्यवस्था आशुन्दा में करनी चाहिये और उम्मी के अनुसार काम होना चाहिये।

Shri Panigrahi (Puri): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I am glad that this half-an-hour discussion has raised some important points so far as the procurement of rice in Madhya Pradesh is concerned.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Normally other hon. Members can put only questions.

Shri Panigrahi: Sir, two or three questions come to my mind, and would request the hon. Deputy Minister to answer them. The Government has said that the State trading scheme itself has not been finalised yet by the Centre. Therefore, I would like to know under what schemes the different State Governments like those of Madhya Pradesh and Orissa have been procuring rice and paddy on their own behalf and on behalf of the Government of India. Secondly, it has been estimated in the beginning

[Shri Panigrahi]

that there should be a surplus of 4 lakh tons of rice in Orissa and about 3 lakh tons of rice in Madhya Pradesh. But it is now being calculated that this surplus may come down. It may be that the rice which was expected to be surplus has gone underground because of the defective working of the State trading scheme

I would like to be enlightened on this point as to why, when the Government had not finalised the scheme of State trading, the State Governments were not asked to at least appoint—where there is no co-operative—village panchayats to go into procurement from the villages. I think that should have helped matters. The Government should have at least advanced some money to the panchayats—where there is no co-operative—instead of appointing those purchasing agents without having any scheme for procurement of rice and paddy finalised.

**Shri Radhelal Vyas (Ujjain):** Sir, I have only two or three questions to ask of the Deputy Minister. First of all, as already explained by my hon. friend here, there were no adequate arrangements for purchasing the whole stock that came to the market. No. 1 was there adequate arrangement to provide all the money that was required to purchase the paddy or the rice that came to the market. I would like to know whether still this State trading scheme has not been finalised and how long this experiment of price-support scheme will continue. Already the new wheat crop has begun to come to the market and in the next fortnight it will be available in plenty. I would like to know why this scheme has not been finalised. Have they not gained experience for the last two or three months? Why should there be so much delay in finalising this scheme? Would it not cause some harassment or loss to the cultivators? I would like to have an answer from

the hon. Deputy Minister. Especially when the State Government of Madhya Pradesh has been pressing and urging on the Central Government to fix the price for wheat, I would like to know why they have not been able to fix a price as yet.

Rice has been procured in the Chattisgarh area. But it is taken, of course, under permit to Bombay or other deficit States. I would like to know why the Central Government has not put any ban on the export of rice from these deficit areas. It cannot go out of Madhya Pradesh without a permit, but from Bombay it can go to any part of the country with the result that the traders there can take the rice to any part. Very high quality rice can be taken to any part of the country and middleman's profit can be earned. Therefore, I would like to know why a ban should not be put on the export of this commodity from those States which are already deficit and which depend on supplies from other States or from the Centre.

My third question is in regard to the northern districts of Madhya Pradesh.

**The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. M. Thomas):** To which deficit State is my hon. friend referring?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Bombay.

**Shri Radhelal Vyas:** Rice is allowed to be exported from Bombay, and there is no ban on it. Bombay is heavily deficit. Now, my third question is this. In my State of Madhya Pradesh, Morena used to depend on supplies of rice from Gird or Bind districts. But it is a border district. Uttar Pradesh is just on the border and the price of rice is very high. Now, I learn that two lakhs of maunds of rice were allowed to be taken to Morena from Chattisgarh area under permits issued by the collector, and what happened to it? The price was

paid at the rate of Rs. 15 per maund in Chattisgarh area and the traders and businessmen of Morena paid a little more than that; they bring the rice to Morena and then smuggle and sell the rice to the smaller traders at the rate of Rs. 18 per maund. The latter sell the rice to others at the rate of Rs. 20 and then the rice comes to Dholpur and from Dholpur it goes to Agra or other parts of Uttar Pradesh and sells there at the rate of Rs. 24 a maund. Now, I can understand that if the people of Morena are in need of rice they must be supplied, but why should it not be allowed to be sold at the price which is allowed for the fair price shops and why should it be allowed to be freely moved or passed on from one trader to another trader in these districts from where the rice is procured? Should any ban be not put? What arrangements are being made to check the smuggling and the increase in price, by the Central Government? I would like to know that

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** All the three questions have been put now.

**Shri Radhelal Vyas:** I should like to put a few more questions. I would like to know whether definite orders have been issued to purchase hand-pounded rice, because there were complaints about this. Then there were also complaints that there were different qualities of rice produced in the different districts of Chattisgarh area. For example, the rice produced in Durg or Surguja or Bastar differs in quality from district to district. I want to know whether this difference in quality has been taken into consideration. There were complaints that prices were fixed on the basis of a particular quality, and the quality which was found in one district was not available in another district. The quality differed. I want to know whether anything has been done or any orders have been passed to remove this anomaly, so that the cultivators

of all the other districts may be equally benefited.

श्री २० सि किशोर (होशंगाबाद) :  
 उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, बहुत भी बातें माननीय सदस्यों ने इसके सम्बन्ध में कही हैं। मुझे केवल एक बात ही विशेष रूप से कहनी है और मैं माननीय मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ कि जब किमी गल्ले की खरीद के लिए सरकार की ओर से कीमत मुकर्रर की जाती है तब किन किन तथ्यों पर ध्यान दिया जाता है। क्या यह बात तो नहीं है कि अचानक ही किमी गल्ले की कीमत मुकर्रर कर दी जाती है? इसमें तो किमानों के रास्ते में बड़ी छड़चने का मकनी है, बड़ी कठिनाइयाँ का मकनी हैं, बड़ी तकलीफों का उनको सामना करना पड़ सकता है। कीमत मुकर्रर करने वक़्त क्या आप इस बात का भी ध्यान रखते हैं कि पैदा करने में किना सर्चा आता है या नहीं रखती है? क्या यह भी देखा जाता है या नहीं कि पिछले पांच सालों में किस तरह की फसलें हुई हैं? गंगा भी होना है कि दो साल तो अच्छी फसल होती है, दो साल साधारण होती है और एक साल बुरी होती है।

पैदावार देखने के पहले क्या इस बात का भी ध्यान रखा जाता है अथवा नहीं कि पांच सालों में जितनी पैदावार हुई है, उसकी धीसत के ऊपर अदावा पैदावार का लगाया जाये? पटवारी लोग या दूसरे लोग जब पैदावार की जाच करते हैं तो वे अच्छे से अच्छे खेतों को ही देखते हैं और अच्छे से अच्छे खेतों में भी खेत के उस टुकड़े को देखते हैं जहाँ पर फसल बहुत अच्छी हुई होती है जिसका मतीबा यह होता है कि जो अदावा होता है वह बहुत ज्यादा का होना है जबकि फसल उतनी होती नहीं है। ऐसी सूरत में जो धीसत निकाला जाता है वह बहुत ज्यादा का निकलता है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या धीसत निकालने का कोई सही तरीका भी धारण निकाला है या नहीं निकाला है।

[श्री २० सि० किलेवार]

मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूँ कि उसकी क्या कीमत बैठती है, क्या लार्च बैठता है फसल काट लेने के बाद बाजार में ले जाने से, इसका भी क्या ध्यान रखा जाता है? मैं चाहता हूँ कि इसको भी धायको ध्यान में रखना चाहिये। यह बहुत जरूरी चीज है। इसके बारे में कोई वैज्ञानिक प्रणाली निकाली जानी चाहिये थी जिससे कोई गलती की सम्भावना न रहे।

मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूँ कि कीमत मुकर्रर करने के पहले क्या किसान से या किसानों की किसी सस्था अथवा सस्थाओं से सरकार कभी सलाह लेती है या सलाह देने के लिये उनको बुलाती है अथवा नहीं बुलाती है क्या उनका बुलाना सरकार जरूरी समझती है या नहीं समझती है? मैं एक किसान हूँ और मैं जानता हूँ कि किसानों को किन किन मुसीबतों का, किन किन कठिनाइयों का सामना करना पड़ता है। मैं बली भांति जानता हूँ कि अगर किसान की फसल अच्छी होती है तो लोग चिल्लाना शुरू कर देते हैं और कहना शुरू कर देते हैं कि बहुत अच्छी फसल हुई है, लेकिन अगर बुरी होती है तो उसकी बात कोई पूछता नहीं है। जो मुसीबतें किसान उठाते हैं, उन्हें बही जानते हैं।

मेरे मित्रों ने बताया है कि छत्तीसगढ़ में क्या हुआ है। वहाँ के किसान आज अल्पमत निराश हैं। उनमें कोई उत्साह नहीं रह गया है और न गल्ला पैदा करने में उनकी कोई रुचि रह गई है। मैं समझता हूँ कि उनके धान की जो कीमत मुकर्रर की गई है उसमें यह ध्यान नहीं रखा गया है कि पिछले चार पांच सालों से बहुत बुरी फसलें छत्तीसगढ़ में हुई हैं।

मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो गलतियाँ धान की सरकारी खरीदों में छत्तीसगढ़ में हुई हैं, उनको दौहराया न जाये, इसके बारे में सरकार क्या कर रही है? यह बहुत जरूरी है कि उसके ऊपर सरकार विचार करे और जांच करे और

अगर आवश्यक प्रतीत हो तो एक छोटी सी समिति भी बना दे जो जांच पड़ताल करके उपाय सुझाये। अब सरकार गल्ले का व्यापार अपने हाथ में लेने जा रही है और उसे देखना चाहिये कि जो भी तरीका वह अपनाये वह फूलफूल ही और बेचारे किसान मारे न जायें। जिस प्रकार का चोटाला छत्तीसगढ़ में हुआ है, जिसकी वजह से किसानों को इतनी परेशानी का सामना करना पड़ा है, वैसे भागे नहीं होना चाहिये। अब सरकार बहुत बड़ा बंधा गल्ले की खरीद का अपने साथ में ले रही है और ऐसा नहीं होना चाहिये कि वे गलतियाँ फिर से हों।

किसानों को पैसा देने के बारे में भी यहाँ पर माननीय सदस्यों द्वारा कुछ बातें कही गई हैं। मैं चाहता हूँ कि किसानों को उसी रोज पैसा मिल जाना चाहिये और अगर नहीं मिलता है तो उनको बहुत भारी मुसीबत का सामना करना पड़ सकता है। वे बेचारे २५-३० मील से अपना माल लाते हैं और अगर उनको पैसा उसी रोज नहीं दिया जाता है तो इसका नतीजा यह होगा कि उन को पैसा भिनन नक पेड़ के नीचे पड़ा रहना पड़ेगा और न खाने को मिलेगा और न ही उनके बिलों को चरने के लिये कोई चीज मिलेगी। इसबास्ते मैं चाहता हूँ कि सरकार पैसे का प्रबन्ध पहले से ही कर ले और उन को उसी दिन पैसा दे दिया जाये करे।

**Shri A. M. Thomas:** Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the discussion has been raised on procurement prices in Madhya Pradesh, but a vast field has been covered by several Members. However, I am glad that I have got this opportunity to dispel certain doubts which have been cast on the procurement operations that we are having now.

Mr. Supakar, who initiated the discussion, charged the Government that we announced the policy of State

trading but no precautionary measures have been taken to see that state trading, whenever it is to be introduced, is not being torpedoed and that the possibility of stocks going underground has not been taken into consideration. It is true that there has been some delay . . .

**Shri Supakar:** Long delay.

**Shri Thomas:** . . . in the matter of finalisation of the state trading scheme. The various stages that the scheme has passed through have all been explained to this House on more than one occasion. Two days back, there was a question concerning this and my senior colleague, the Minister, explained the various stages through which the draft scheme has passed and he has also said that it is now under the active consideration of the Cabinet. It will not also be correct to charge Government that precautionary measures have not been taken which would fit in with the policy of state trading, whatever shape it may ultimately assume.

Our procurement operations themselves are in the direction of state trading and hon Members would concede that if we want to have state trading, the object is that Government should have control over the marketable surplus in the country. The object is socialisation of the wholesale trade. It is something elementary that in its implementation the quantities that the Government can procure and can take control of will determine the capacity of the Government to control the price level and also the question of having State Trading in the end.

As the question itself refers to procurement operations in Madhya Pradesh, I may state that we have got a Central Government machinery there for procuring whatever quantity of rice is available. It is not correct to say that we are making delays in the matter of purchase, that

we are not prompt in the matter of payment and that we are making undue delays in these respects. These allegations, I am afraid, are either too exaggerated or without any basis.

**Pandit J. P. Jyotishi (Sagar):** Is the machinery widespread?

**Shri A. M. Thomas:** I will come to that.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** We have exceeded all the surplus in time already.

**Shri A. M. Thomas:** Coming to Madhya Pradesh, according to the account that we have received in the Ministry, on the 13th March we have been able to procure 178,000 tons of rice in Madhya Pradesh. Out of these 178,000 tons, 142,000 tons have already been moved from the senders of procurement. I am referring to this because an allegation has been made that quantities are not being moved. Whenever necessary, we have been running special trains so that there will not be any difficulty in the matter of storage.

**Pandit J. P. Jyotishi:** On a point of information. Has it been purchased from the cultivators?

**Shri A. M. Thomas:** I am coming to that also. In Madhya Pradesh the Central Government is procuring rice, and the State Government is procuring paddy. We have fixed the price of paddy on the basis of the price we have fixed for rice. The State Government has purchased about 73,000 tons of paddy on 13th March, 1950. So, the Central Government machinery and the State Government machinery are operating there side by side, our machinery for the purchase of rice and the State Government machinery for the purchase of paddy.

Then, an allegation has been made with regard to payment. My information is that daily bills are being drawn to the extent of Rs. 15 lakhs to Rs. 20 lakhs for this. Care is taken to see that payment is made at least within

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48 hours of the time of purchase. The hon House will grant that when it is the Government machinery which is purchasing the officers have to exercise due control that quality is according to sample, quantity is not short and so on. Naturally, that will take some time. The price depends on the quality and unless the quality is good we cannot purchase it, because this is meant for long time storage. So, these circumstances must also be taken into consideration. Of course, all avoidable delays must be avoided. But if we commit any mistake at this stage, if we are careless in our purchase of rice, as the House knows very well, there is a likelihood of our losing crores of rupees of the taxpayers' money, which has to be guarded against. Therefore, even if there is some delay, it is an unavoidable delay, and we are as anxious as the House that everything should be expedited.

Then, Shri Supakar referred to the State of Orissa. In Orissa the State Government is procuring on our behalf. We have also got our machinery there to take over from the State Government whatever is procured by that agency. After discussion we found that the State Government was in favour of having their own machinery for procurement operations and not the Central Government machinery. In these matters, we have to give some consideration to the feelings of the State Governments.

In Orissa, on our account, 51,900 tons of rice have been purchased up to 13th of March. The paddy that has been purchased on our account comes to 29,500 tons. In Orissa also, it may be said that procurement operations are proceeding satisfactorily.

It has been said that we are rejecting large quantities and that all that is being offered is not purchased. Of course, as I have already said, we must have some regard for quality. Wherever possible make some relaxation. At one stage rice offered with

percentage of broken up to 35 per cent was being purchased upto 27 per cent is a tolerable limit. We have gone beyond that. We have now given instructions that rice with broken up to 40 per cent may also be purchased. So that, whatever possible steps can be taken in the matter of procurement, we are taking.

Shri Supakar: May I be excused for a little interruption? Is it a fact that the quality of rice which the Government refused to purchase from the producer on account of its being lower than the required standard, the very same rice is purchased when that passes through a middleman and the Government purchase the very same thing?

Shri A M Thomas: No, only if it is brought within the permissible limit, we will purchase. It is very easy for the producer himself or the person who tenders for sale, just to bring it within the permissible limit. There is absolutely no difficulty. That is not a difficult process to have the percentage of broken in a particular lot brought down. There is no difficulty at all.

Some Members referred to the agitation that was carried on in Madhya Pradesh.

Mr Deputy-Speaker: What the hon Member said was that one quality was refused when it was in possession of the cultivator or producer, but the same was taken by the Government when it passed through a broker or middleman.

Shri A. M Thomas: It is absolutely incorrect.

Shri Supakar: I hope it is incorrect.

Shri A M Thomas: I can assure the hon House that we have set up a very efficient procurement machinery in Madhya Pradesh. We have got our own officers from the Centre

who go there occasionally and supervise these operations. As far as possible, we find that as much care as possible is taken in these matters. I do not think that that allegation is correct. It may be a fact that quantities which we could not afford to take have gone into the hands of middlemen and they would have brought it within permissible limits by adding good quality rice and then sold it. The very same quantity: it is too uncharitable an allegation to be made against them. The procurement machinery has functioned there for some time. I do not think such allegations have ever been made. At any rate, no such allegation has come to our notice.

Some reference was made to the agitation carried on in Madhya Pradesh. I am glad to read from the papers that that agitation has been advisedly withdrawn.

**Shri Supakar:** Since when?

**Shri A. M. Thomas:** Perhaps recently. Better late than never.

Hon Members will concede, as far as Madhya Pradesh is concerned, the placing of the ban on export of paddy has been a desirable step. The ban on the export of rice, and paddy products has been imposed on the 20th of December, 1957. That it has been beneficial to the people of Madhya Pradesh taken as a whole is evident from the fact that although in Madhya Pradesh there was a shortage of production in 1957-58 from that of 1956-57 to the extent of more than a million tons of rice, Madhya Pradesh was able to survive the crisis, and when prices of rice went up in other parts of the country, prices did not go up to that extent in Madhya Pradesh, so that the ban could be considered to have been a very beneficial step.

18 hrs

**Shri Panigrahi:** What was the estimated surplus in Madhya Pradesh?

**Shri A. M. Thomas:** So, the agitation was mainly carried on for the

raising of the procurement prices, or for removing the ban so that it would facilitate the producers to export it to other deficit areas. I do not think that any Member would argue for the position that it would be desirable to remove the ban.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** If he has much more to say, then he might lay a statement on the Table of the House.

**Shri A. M. Thomas:** No, Sir. I will finish within five minutes.

Then the only thing that the Government can do is to procure the surplus quantity that would be available there, for which we have set up the machinery. That our machinery is beneficial from the point of view of the producer will be seen from the fact that the open market prices in Madhya Pradesh are a little lower than the procurement prices themselves, so that our procurement prices serve as a sort of price support.

The charge has been made that large quantities are being smuggled from Madhya Pradesh. Perhaps there is some smuggling, but that there has not been any large-scale smuggling will be borne out by the fact that the open market prices are a little less than the procurement prices. If there is large-scale smuggling, what we would naturally expect is that there would be a rise in the open market prices, whatever be the controlled or procurement prices, but that does not exist there. Our information is that while the procurement price for coarse variety is Rs 15, the open market price is Rs 14.37 and in certain other areas Rs 14.

Then the question of the basis on which these procurement prices were fixed has been raised by one hon. Member, the last hon. Member who spoke. This matter has been explained more than once before the House. It has been stated that the procurement prices have been based firstly on the procurement prices in force in

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1952-53, and secondly, on the post-harvest prices of rice in 1955-56, 1956-57 and 1957-58.

In Madhya Pradesh the procurement price in 1952-53 for coarse common variety was only Rs. 12. The question of Orissa was also raised. In Orissa the procurement price in 1952 was anyhow less than the procurement price that we pay now.

Regarding post-harvest prices, in Raipur for common market in December 1955 it was Rs. 12.50; in January 1956 it was Rs. 12.25; in December 1956 it was Rs. 15 and in January 1957 it was Rs. 17; in December 1957 it was Rs. 19 and in January 1958 it was Rs. 16.

So, my hon. friends would, I think, agree with me that the prices that we

have fixed for Madhya Pradesh as well as for other States are quite reasonable, and this fact has been explained more than once before the House.

I think I have answered almost all the points that have been raised by hon. Members. As I said in the beginning, I am glad that this opportunity has been given to the Government to dispel some of the doubts that have been raised with regard to the procurement of rice.

18.05 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, the 19th March, 1959/Phalgun 28, 1880 (Saka).*