

12.12½ hrs.

## COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

## FIFTY-SEVENTH REPORT

**Sardar Hukam Singh (Bhatinda):**  
Sir, I beg to present the Fifty-seventh Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions.

12.13 hrs.

## CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

## RISE IN PRICES OF RICE AND PADDY IN WEST BENGAL AND ORISSA

**Shri Chintamoni Panigrahi (Puri):**  
Sir, under Rule 197, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Food and Agriculture to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:

"The alarming rise in the prices of rice and paddy in West Bengal and Orissa."

**The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. M. Thomas):**  
There has no doubt been some rise in the prices of rice in West Bengal and Orissa during January, 1960. The rise in the prices in West Bengal cannot, however, be in consequence of the formation of the zone as the creation of the zone has only enabled West Bengal to get supplies of rice and paddy from Orissa. The market arrivals of rice and paddy in West Bengal are progressively increasing. Since the last few days the prices of rice in West Bengal have started declining and already there has been a fall of about Re. 1 per maund. At present the wholesale prices of common rice in West Bengal are of the order of Rs. 22 to Rs. 24 per maund.

2. In Orissa some rise in the prices after the formation of the zone was anticipated. There has been an increase of about Rs. 2 per maund in

the wholesale prices of rice in Orissa after the formation of the zone. The present wholesale prices in Orissa are of the order of Rs. 17 to Rs. 18 per maund for common milled rice and for handpounded rice in the interior centres the prices are lower being Rs. 14 to Rs. 15 per maund.

3. After the formation of the zone on 21st December, 1959, certain preliminaries had to be gone through before the movement of rice and paddy from Orissa could take place through trade channels. The traders had to get themselves registered under the new Food-grain Dealers' Licensing Order and they had also to pay a levy to the Orissa Government under their new levy order. This took a little time. Movements have now started in adequate quantities. Already about one lakh tons of rice and paddy have moved to West Bengal and the movement is reported to be taking place at the rate of about 100 wagons per day.

4. The formation of the zone has on the one hand benefited the cultivators of Orissa who are now able to obtain better prices for their produce and on the other the consumers of West Bengal where the prices are now showing a downward tendency.

5. The State Governments are watching the position carefully and are having periodical discussions between themselves so as to take such measures as may be considered necessary from time to time.

12.16 hrs.

## STATEMENT RE: FOOD SITUATION IN MIZO DISTRICT OF ASSAM

**The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. M. Thomas):** On 15th February, 1960, there was an adjournment motion in the Lok Sabha regarding alleged starvation deaths in the Mizo hill district of Assam. During the last few days a number of questions have also been received which show that certain Honourable