

SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT: The hon. member himself has said that the matter has to be finally disposed of by the Supreme Court. I cannot anticipate today what the Supreme Court might say on this. Therefore, will it be proper for the Government to take action until this matter is finally disposed of by the Supreme Court? I hope the hon. member will agree that it will not be proper. But I can say this that the Government is certainly not interested in shielding anybody.

Food production and Import

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*171. SARDAR SWARAN SINGH SOKHI:

SHRI SAROJ MUKHERJEE:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) total figure of foodgrain production of various types for the current year;

(b) amount of foodgrains, (i) rice and (ii) wheat proposed to be imported from foreign countries; and

(c) total amount of buffer stock of foodgrains at the disposal of the Central Government for the current year and actual quantity of 'aman' kharif wheat etc. kept in Government godown?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI ANNA-SAHEB P. SHINDE): (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) The estimates of foodgrains production for 1975-76 are still under scrutiny. According to available reports, foodgrains production during 1975-76 is expected to be more than 118 million tonnes. As regards current

crop year (1976-77) it is too early to give any idea of the likely production of foodgrain crops.

(b) The Government of India keeps under constant review the position regarding the need for foodgrain imports and makes purchases from abroad to the extent considered necessary after taking into account crop prospects, internal availability, gap between internal availability and the requirement of the public distribution system, the need to create a reasonable size of buffer stock, foreign exchange resources, price trend in international market and other related factors. It is neither possible nor is in the public interest to indicate the quantity of wheat and rice that may have to be imported during the current year.

(c) The total stock of foodgrains (buffer and operational stocks) with the Central and State Governments at the end of June, 1976 were of the order of about 17.0 million tonnes, as compared to 5.7 million tonnes at the end of June, 1975.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH SOKHI: In reply to part (a) the statement says: "The estimates of foodgrains production for 1975-76 are still under scrutiny". May I know why it could not be scrutinised up till now? May I know when the total figure would be available?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE: The hon. member did not read further. The next sentence says that the food production is expected to be more than 118 million tonnes. In this crop calculation, the summer crop harvested in May etc. also has to come in and so the final figures are still under compilation. But the broad indication is that it will be a record crop in the history of the country and it is likely to be somewhere between 118 and 119 million tonnes.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH SOKHI: In paragraph (b) of the statement it is mentioned:

"It is neither possible, nor in the public interest to indicate the quantity of wheat and rice that may have to be imported during the current year."

It may not be in the public interest to indicate the production. But why do you say that it is not possible? Why is it not possible, when even the newspapers give all these figures?

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not argue. If the Minister says that it is not in the public interest, that is the end of it. If he wants to ask another question, he may do so.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH SOKHI: What is the up-to-date stock of food-grains?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE: 17 million tonnes.

SHRI RAGHUNANDAN LAL BHATTIA: Out of the 17 million tonnes of buffer stock which we have at present, how much is lying inside the godown and how much is lying outside, not properly covered?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE: Roughly 12 million to 13 million tonnes are in pucca godowns. The rest, 4 million to 5 million tonnes are, though not in pucca godowns, in raised plinth and covered places.

श्री विभूति मिश्र : क्या यह सही है कि स्टोरेज कैपेसिटी के अभाव में सरकार ने इस साल ज्यादा गल्ला नहीं खरीदा है, और जो खरीदा भी है, वह, जैसा कि हम रेल-गाड़ी से देखते हैं, कानपुर और मुजफ्फरपुर आदि स्थानों पर केवल टाट से ढक कर रखा हुआ है, जिस पर वर्षा आदि का प्रभाव पड़ता है? मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि सरकार अगले साल अपनी स्टोरेज कैपेसिटी कितने टन की बनाने जा रही है। सरकार ने कितना रुपया किस किस स्टेट को दिया है, और वह केन्द्रीय क्षेत्र में कितना

रुपया खर्च करने जा रही है, ताकि हमारे देश में पर्याप्त स्टोरेज कैपेसिटी हो जस्ये और गल्ला रखने में दिक्कत न हो?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE: The Planning Commission have recently agreed to give to the Food Corporation of India Rs. 30 crores, over and above the Rs. 16 to 17 crores which are being spent this year. We are also exploring the possibility of a loan from the World Bank for building up storage capacity. Though it is in the preliminary stages of discussion, we are expecting about Rs. 130 crores from the World Bank. During the course of this Plan we expect to add 1 million tonnes every year, broadly speaking. If we take into consideration the temporary storage also, perhaps 5 to 6 million would be added during the course of this Plan.

श्री कमला मिश्र "मधुकर" : गवर्नमेंट की ओर से यह दावा किया जाता है कि इस साल अन्न का रिकार्ड उत्पादन हुआ है। वह यह भी दावा करती है कि उस ने बहुत खरीद भी की है। माननीय सदस्यों ने यह ठीक कहा है कि सरकार के द्वारा जो अन्न खरीदा गया है, उस को अपने गोदामों में न रख कर रेलवे गोडाउनों और प्राइवेट गोदामों में रखा गया है। इस बात की क्या गारन्टी है कि जो अनाज प्राइवेट गोदामों में रखा गया है, वह सुरक्षित रह सकेगा और वह कीड़ों-मकोड़ों और बीमारियों से प्रभावित नहीं हो पायेगा? सरकार ने उस अनाज को सुरक्षित रखने के लिए क्या व्यवस्था की है?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE: When we hire space in private godowns on a rental basis, the control is ours, our security and watch and ward staff remain there. As far as the safe keeping of foodgrains is concerned, there are well-prescribed norms and standards. We have a highly specialised storage section, and qualified persons

are put in charge of it. Necessary precautions are taken to protect the foodgrains against moisture, rodents etc.

श्री नरसिंह नारायण पांडे : मंत्री महोदय ने बताया है कि 118 मिलियन टन अनाज देश में पैदा हुआ है और बफर स्टॉक और अप्रेशन स्टॉक के रूप में सरकार के पास 17 मिलियन टन है। क्या यह सही है कि आपने मार्केट में बेहू और चावल सस्ता मिल रहा है और वह उपलब्ध है? क्या यह भी सही है कि कमजोर आप्स और फेवर प्राइस गारंटी से विभिन्न स्त्रोतों को जो अनाज दिया है, उसकी मात्रा पहले से कम है और सरकार का बफर स्टॉक और अप्रेशन ल स्टॉक उतना एम्हास्ट नहीं हो रहा है, जितना होना चाहिए? इस साल खरीफ की फसल अच्छी हुई है और मानसून के अच्छा होने के कारण रबी की फसल भी अच्छी होने की आशा है। सरकार ने अनाज इम्पोर्ट करने के लिए इन्टरनेशनल कन्टेक्ट्स किये हैं। क्या सरकार वर्तमान स्थिति को देखते हुए इस पर पुनर्विचार करेगी और इम्पोर्ट किये जाने वाले अनाज की मात्रा को रिबाइज करेगी। ?

श्री महोदय : मंत्री महोदय यह बात नहीं बतायेंगे उन्होंने पहले ही कह दिया है कि यह बताना पब्लिक इन्ट्रेस्ट में नहीं है।

श्री नरसिंह नारायण पांडे : जब बाहर दिये जाने वाले अनाज के स्टॉक की मात्रा भी कम हो रही है और बाजार में भी सामान उपलब्ध है, तो सरकार क्या पालिसी निश्चित कर रही है, जिससे वह अपना स्टॉक भी रख सके और बाजार को भी ठीक से देख सके ?

SHRI ANNASAHIB P. SHINDE:
With your permission I can say, because the Members seem to be agitat-

ed that from last June we have taken a firm decision not to have any imports for the time being. As far as the offtake is concerned, because of easy availability in the market, naturally the offtake figures are going down, and the consumers are in a position to get the foodgrains in the open market practically at the same price. This is a very happy position, but as soon as we find that there is either drought, or that the prices are rising in any part of the country, immediately enough foodgrains would be pumped in and these stocks will be used in the interests of the consumer.

श्री नरसिंह नारायण पांडे : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मेरे प्रश्न का उत्तर नहीं मिला है। आप मेरी मदद करें। क्या सरकार किसानों की प्राइस को गिराने जा रही है? क्या उस ने कोई कमेटी मूकुरर की है?

अध्यक्ष महोदय : वह भलग सवाल है।

Lifting of Wheat and Rice from Punjab

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*173. SHRI RAGHUNANDAN LAL BHATIA:

SHRI RAM PRAKASH:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Punjab Government have urged the Centre either to direct the Food Corporation of India to lift 325,000 tonnes of wheat and rice every month or help the State to build additional storage capacity; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI ANNA-