

SHRI PILOO MODY : Are you disallowing to disclose the public interest ?

MR. SPEAKER : I am disallowing. Next question.

SHRI PILOO MODY : In the public interest, he has gone to the next question. *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : I had already called three Members.

Storage Arrangements for Foodgrains to be procured during next six months

*310. **SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT :** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether adequate and proper storage arrangements have been made by the Food Corporation of India for procurement of foodgrains to be made during the next six months; and

(b) what is the quantity to be procured during this period and what arrangements have been made ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE) :

(a) Yes, Sir. All possible arrangements for storage of foodgrains to be procured by Food Corporation of India during the next 6 months are being made.

(b) According to the present estimates, the quantity to be procured during the next 6 months i.e. from December '71 to May '72 would be nearly 5.8 million tonnes of various foodgrains.

Food Corporation of India has planned to increase the storage capacity from its present level of 7.76 million tonnes to about 9 million tonnes by May, 1972, by expediting its construction programme, by resorting to hiring of additional storage accommodation, and wherever necessary, by arranging open storage under which foodgrains are kept on raised platforms and are duly

covered by water proof polythene covers/tarpaulins and are also otherwise well protected.

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT : I would like to know, out of the storage capacity for 7.76 million tonnes which is available to present with the Food Corporation of India, how much of it is covered storage capacity, how much of it is open storage capacity and for foodgrains which are stored for six months, particularly, from Punjab, how much of it is covered storage ?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE : The figure which I have mentioned is all covered storage capacity.

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT : I would like to know further if it is true that the Food Corporation of India or the Food Ministry have made certain proposals for raising the target of food procurement in view of the situation relating to Bangla Desh refugees and the general situation in the country which so far have not been accepted by the Finance Ministry. What is the correct position in this regard ?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE : So far there has been no problem of our proposals being rejected by the Finance Ministry. Originally, there was a provision of Rs. 73 crores for construction of storage capacity. For procurement, only working capital is required and that is being given by the Finance Ministry from time to time. In future, we expect a procurement of larger magnitude and even storage on a larger scale will have to be undertaken. We will take up this question at an appropriate time with the Ministry of Finance.

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT : How much is the Food Corporation paying as hiring charges in regard to the storage capacity ?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE : I have got a figure of hired capacity of 3.9 million tonnes. The exact figure will have to be worked out. With appropriate notice, it should be possible for me to give it.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA : The Minister of Agriculture has kindly just now informed the House that there is not much of a problem regarding storage of foodgrains. Accord-

ding to our information—I think, the Minister of Rehabilitation will bear me out—in the distribution of rations to the millions of refugees in West Bengal, Assam, Tripura and Meghalaya, there have been a number of not only irregularities but also shortfall of supply to the refugees due to storage problem as also supply problem. I want to know whether this is a fact and if so, will the Government take steps to rectify this ?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE: Storage problem, by and large, was not so acute in the Eastern States or the deficit States in the past. The storage problem is acute in surplus States like Punjab and Haryana and also due to slow railway movement.

As far as disruption of supplies is concerned it was due to floods and because of the difficulties of rail movement. Now the position has improved and at the moment there is no difficulty.

SHRI K. NARAYANA RAO : Has any representation been received from the Government of Andhra Pradesh about the inadequate nature of storage facilities and whether the Central Government has taken any steps to improve the existing position ?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE : We have reviewed the Statewise position. In Andhra, additional storage capacity will have to be constructed and the Government has given due thought to it.

श्री बी. पी. मौर्य : जैसा कि कृषि मंत्री स्वयं जानते हैं जो आकृती होता है वह तौल में भी ज्यादा लेता है और दामों में भी किसान को बहुत परेशान करता है। जो दाम सरकार दे, सीधे किसानों को उसका लाभ पहुंचे और किसानों की यह परेशानी दूर हो, इसके बारे में क्या कृषि मंत्री कुछ विशेष कदम उठाएंगे ?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE : The question is regarding storage. I appreciate the hon. Member's concern, but it does not arise out of this.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Lakshmanan—ab-

Offer of aid from U.S.S.R. and Hungary for Development of Sugarbeet and Sunflower

*312. **SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH :**
SHRI P.M. MEHTA :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state ;

(a) whether recently USSR and Hungary have offered assistance in India's agricultural development, particularly in new fields like cultivation of sugar-beet and sunflower ;

(b) if so, the terms of the offer ; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE) : (a) to (c). Yes Sir ; So far as the U. S. S. R. is concerned the Protocol signed with that country was placed on the Table of the House in reply to Unstarred Question No. 4348 on the 8th July, 1971. As regards Hungary a similar Protocol is being negotiated. The emphasis in both cases is on Joint Collaborative Programmes of agriculture in fields mutually determined from time to time.

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH : Will the Government consider the question of coming to an agreement with other West-European countries like West Germany which has experience of sugar-beet cultivation and also which are the areas in India where the Government propose to cultivate sugar-beet ?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE : As far as development of agricultural sciences and agricultural technology are concerned, we are trying to have the maximum possible collaboration or co-operation with all the friendly countries. As far as West Germany is concerned, we are taking collaboration in various fields and sciences and as the hon. Member is aware, West Germany has a number of Area Development Programmes in our country like Mandi.

As far as sugar-beet growing areas are concerned, mainly the irrigated regions, in