

grains by the Food Corporation. I have the total figure for the foodgrains procured up to June; it is as follows: rice, 2.11 million tonnes; wheat, 0.39 million tonnes; jowar, 0.58 million tonnes and gram, 47 thousand tonnes

Coastal Shipping

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*1956, Shri S. C. Samanta:
Shri H. F. Chatterjee:
Shri Yashpal Singh:

Will the Minister of Transport and Shipping be pleased to state.

(a) whether the Indian Coastal Conference has approached the Central Government for the release of foreign exchange immediately to help it out of its difficult plight;

(b) whether it is a fact that the National Shipping Board has also recommended to Government to help the Coastal Shipping with foreign exchange especially after devaluation, and

(c) if so, the steps taken in the matter?

The Minister of Transport and Shipping (Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao): (a) and (b). Representations from the Indian National Steamship Owners Association and a recommendation from the National Shipping Board relating to release of foreign exchange for the acquisition of additional/replacement tonnage for coastal shipping operations have been received by Government.

(c) It has not been possible in view of the difficult foreign exchange situation to agree to a block allocation of foreign exchange for coastal shipping. Specific applications for the release of foreign exchange for the purchase of coastal ships however are examined on merits with reference to the urgency of the demand, the source from which the ship is proposed to be purchased, the availability of credit, the capacity for manufacture indigenously etc.

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know whether small ships are under construction at Mazagon dock and other docks also for use in coastal shipping and the Indian islands also and, if so, whether the Government is going to allow some foreign exchange which will be required by the manufacturers?

Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao: I do not have information on this particular subject, whether Mazagon dock or the Garden Reach Workshop is constructing vessels for coastal shipping. Regarding the question of foreign exchange, if they have given any orders then foreign exchange will be supplied to them.

Shri S. C. Samanta: Is it a fact that the Indian Overseas Shipping is earning some foreign exchange for India and may I know whether the Indian National Shipping Board has recommended the issue of foreign exchange for use in the coastal shipping and if so, whether that will be taken into consideration?

Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao: The Indian National Shipping Board has recommended that foreign exchange should be found for 10 coastal vessels totaling 55 GRT, the question has been referred to the Government in the Ministry concerned, and they have said they will consider each case on its own merits. I think credits are available from Bulgaria which is in a position to construct ships which will be useful for coastal shipping.

श्री यशपाल सिंह: क्या नहीं बला है कि सरकार कितना देना चाहती है और बोर्ड कितना मांग रहा है? क्या सरकार बिनाकूल नहीं देना चाहती है? ऐसी व्यवस्था में किसे तरह से वे लोग प्राय की दिक्कत में से निकल सकेंगे।

Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao: I would not say that the Government is not willing to give anything. I think that the

answer that I gave was that the Government is willing to consider each demand on its own merits. I entirely agree with the hon. Member that some foreign exchange will have to be found for coastal shipping even if coastal shipping does not earn foreign exchange itself.

श्री कामेश्वर सिंह : सरकार विभिन्न प्रायोरिटी इन्स्टीज को प्रायात में छूट देती है, इम्पोर्ट करने की उनका इजाजत देती है, तो क्या कारण है कि सरकार ने कास्टल शिपिंग को इन्फे सबन रखा हुआ है ?

Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao: I am following up that question.

Shri Bal Raj Madhek: Freight costs a lot of foreign exchange and it is a fact that at the moment much of our trade is carried in foreign bottoms because we do not have enough shipping. Until recently the coastal shipping also was monopolised by foreign shipping. Even now some foreign ships take part in coastal shipping because it is a foreign exchange saving project. May I know whether Government will take it in its own hands and build ships for the coastal shipping, so that we may be able to spare as many big ships as possible which are now engaged in coastal shipping for overseas shipping?

Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao: I think the hon. Member is perhaps under a misapprehension. The ships are now using on the coastal lines are not generally so big as to be useful for overseas shipping. Regarding construction of ships, our Vishakhapatnam shipyard is fully occupied and so are Garden Reach and Mazgaon workshops. We want additions to our ship-building capacity to satisfy the very legitimate suggestion made by hon. Member.

श्री मधु लिवडे : इन कास्टल शिपिंग में प्रदत्तान पूर्व में और विनीकाय डीपों के साथ

व्यापारी सम्बन्ध और दूसरे सम्बन्ध बढ़ाने के लिए जो व्यवस्था की जाती है, उसका समावेश होता है। क्या यह बात सही है कि विनीकाय डीपों पर पाकिस्तान की घाँसे पकी है और वहाँ की जनता को उफताया जा रहा है और कहा जा रहा है कि अगर हिन्दुस्तान से जहाज आने लगे तो उसका विरोध कीजिये। प्रदत्तान और विनीकाय के बारे में बताइये कि इनके साथ व्यापारिक बढ़ाने के इत्तजम इसमें आते हैं ?

Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao: I do not know about the extensive range of Pakistand eyes. As far as Minicoy and Andaman are concerned, recently we had specially summoned the Chief Commissioners and Administrators of both the islands to discuss the subject of providing transport facilities both from the mainland to those islands as well as inter-island transport. I think I will be able to give an assurance to the hon. Member that this problem is being looked into very systematically.

Shri M. R. Krishna: The agencies engaged in the distribution of coal and food to various States have often felt that they cannot depend on rail transport because it costs more and also it is not available whenever they want it. On the basis of this, may I know whether at any time either the Planning Commission or the Transport Minister has examined this question and come to a conclusion about the actual requirement of ships for coastal shipping?

Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao: We have been actually pressing this particular point made by the hon. Member that much more of coal traffic should be taken by coastal shipping because coastal shipping is cheaper than railways so far as coal transport is concerned. The whole subject of coastal shipping needs a very thorough examination and the Ministry is proposing very shortly to take up the whole question and draw up a plan for the purpose of

rehabilitation of coastal shipping in the country.

Shri S. Kandappan: Considering the immense possibilities for the promotion of internal trade by coastal shipping, apart from international trade, I am afraid the Government has not even made a beginning. In spite of the creation of the Shipping Corporation long ago, why has the Government not made a comprehensive survey of its potentialities? I want to know what steps the Government are going to take in the shortest possible time to promote coastal trade?

Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao: I think some survey has been made. Apart from the report made by a sub-committee of the National Shipping Board, the Transport Committee appointed by the Planning Commission has also gone into this subject. Actually, the tonnage of coastal shipping has increased from 1.2 lakh GRT in 1947 to 3.5 lakh GRT in 1967. It is not that there has not been any progress. What we need is to modernise coastal shipping. Therefore, the whole subject of operation, the economics of it, the foreign exchange etc. is also under investigation.

Shri S. Kandappan: It is less than what it was during Imperial Choles' time.

Shri K. K. Nayanar: Instead of our building our own shipyard may I know whether the Government is going to sign an agreement with Poland and Yugoslavia for getting ships? Secondly, my information is that the Mitsubishi authorities of Japan have stopped work in the Cochin shipyard. Is it correct; if so, may I know what is the reaction of the Government?

Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao: I think we have entered into an agreement—the Shipping Corporation of India—with Yugoslavia for the purchase of two big tankers for the purpose of carrying oil to the Madras refinery when it comes into existence. Regarding the Cochin Shipyard—I do not know

how it arises out of this question—I am sure the hon. Member would not like the Cochin shipyard to become a shipyard only for small ships. (Interruption).

Subsidy on Foodgrains

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Shri Kanwar Lal Gupta:
Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee:

Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently withdrawn the subsidy on food;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it will further increase the prices of foodgrains and adversely affect the consumers; and

(d) the steps taken in that direction?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Cooperation (Shri Anasahib Shinde): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d). Do not arise.

श्री कबीर लाल गुप्त : क्या मंत्री महोदय बनायेंगे कि सरकार किलनी सबसिडी देती है और उस से कितने लोगों का लाभ पहुंचना है ?

Shri Anasahib Shinde: The amount of subsidy is fairly well known. Last year it was about Rs. 130 crores and this year we expect that it may be Rs. 119 crores. As is well known, in the rationed areas and also in the semi-rationed areas more than 21 crores of people are covered. They might be getting the benefit of this subsidy.

श्री कबीर लाल गुप्त : प्राइमिय बहन लेजी से बढ रही है और इस महंगाई की वजह से फ़िफ्ट इनकम ग्रुप के लिए जिन्दा रहना बड़ा मुश्किल हो गया है। इस देश के लाखों बटोड़ों लोग ऐसे हैं, जो ख़र-क़र रहते हैं। मंत्री महोदय की जानकारी में यह बात होगी कि जो सबसिडी बढ देते हैं, उस के बलाम्बा स्टेट बवर्नमेंट के द्वारा और सबसिडी देने की योजना बनाई है, जैसे, एक स्टेट बवर्नमेंट