

SHRI SHEO NARAIN : Sir, any Minister in the Ministry can answer the questions. In this we are not going to be dictated to by others.

SHRI V. KRISHNAMOORTHY : Sir, on a point of order.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Not during questions.

SHRI V. KRISHNAMOORTHY : This is a Short Notice Question,

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Not even during a Short Notice Question.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION

Per Capita Consumption of Cereals in West Bengal

+

S.NQ. 13. **SHRI SAMAR GUHA** :
**SHRI B.K. DASCHOWD-
HURY** :
SHRI A. SREEDHARAN :
SHRI K. LAKKAPPA :

Will the Minister of **FOOD AND AGRICULTURE** be pleased to state :

(a) Whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the statement made by the West Bengal Food Minister on the 19th March, 1969 in West Bengal Council in which he stated that "the Union Food Minister, Shri Jagjivan Ram told the West Bengal Minister during the recent meeting at Delhi that the people of West Bengal as residents of a deficit State have no right to consume 16 ounce of cereals daily. The Union Food Minister suggested that people of West Bengal should bring down their cereal consumption to 13.2 ounce".

(b) if the statement attributed to the Food Minister is correct, the reasons for fixing the quantity of cereals for per head consumption by West Bengal people ; and

(c) if not, the position of the Central Government for meeting the food deficit of West Bengal ?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE,**

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) : (a) to (c). A press report of the statement has been seen. A copy of the statement made by the Food Minister of West Bengal in Legislative Assembly has been obtained. A copy is laid on the Table of the Sabha. It does not contain any such statement. However, the factual position is that during discussion between the Union Minister of Food, Agriculture, Community Development & Cooperation and the Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister and Food Minister of West Bengal it was found that State Government's estimate of foodgrains deficit was based on a requirement of 16 ozs. per capita per day. It was pointed out that the normal yard stick adopted was 16 ozs. per adult per day. On this basis and on production figures as at present available, the estimated requirement came down. It was found that the final production figures for making an accurate estimate were not available. Since the conditions at present were quite easy and the prices were low, it was agreed that for the present the Central supplies to West Bengal would be taken at 1.2 million tonnes and that the matter could be reviewed later in the year.

Statement

The present food situation and the existing food policy in West Bengal were reviewed at a Cabinet meeting held on 10-3-69. The Government of India have decided to continue the existing State Zones and, therefore, import of rice and wheat from any other State in India to West Bengal on trade account is not permitted. The Central Government was, therefore, requested to meet the entire deficit of West Bengal during the current year which was assessed at 24 lakh tonnes on the basis of production figures so far available. The matter was also discussed at a meeting held in Delhi on 7-3-69 between the Union Food Minister and the Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister and Food Minister of West Bengal. For the present the Central Government could promise a total supply of only 12 lakh tonnes of rice and wheat to West Bengal in 1969, the rice quantum not exceeding 1.5 lakh tonnes. The Central supplies of total cereals to West Bengal in 1968 amounted to 15.2 lakh tonnes including

about 1.2 lakh tonnes of coarse grains like milo, maize, etc. The Union Food Minister, however, agreed to review the position in May next when firm figures of production of wheat and summer paddy in West Bengal during the current year will be available. The Union Food Minister, also, assured that the existing arrangements regarding free flow of coarse grains like barley, maize, jowar, bajra, etc. through trade channels would continue.

The Cabinet discussed the matter in all its aspects and decided that it was too late to make any drastic change in the food policy during the current year. However, internal procurement operations will be intensified so that not only the target of 4.5 lakh tonnes is achieved as quickly as possible but the target may also be exceeded. The Food Corporation of India has been instructed to set up more pay centres, a larger number of purchasing centres, ensure quicker payment to D.P. agents, ensure quicker lifting of stocks from D.P. Agents' godowns and to take other suitable measures for stepping up procurement. The District Magistrates have also been asked to mobilise all their available resources of manpower and vehicles in the districts for stepping up procurement.

The existing levy on rice mills and producers will continue unchanged but steps will be taken to ensure better supervision and prompt collection of the realisable quantities. The existing State cordons, and the cordons around Statutory Rationing areas and surplus districts/areas will also continue.

The existing supplies will be maintained in the S.R. and steps will be taken to extend the benefits of *Modified Rationing* in the districts as and when necessary.

The Cabinet further decided to withdraw the existing restrictions on the movement of *muri* so that *muri* can be moved from one place to other throughout the State without any permit.

The Government hopes all parties would co-operate fully with the Government in execution of this policy.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA : The hon. Minister says that such a statement attributed to the Food Minister of West Bengal is not found in the record of the West Bengal Council but it is a fact that such a statement in the name of the Food Minister of Bengal appeared in all West Bengal papers.

SHRI V. KRISHNAMOORTHY : The statement of a minister made in the Legislative Assembly has been completely contradicted by the Minister here. Then how can the question be raised that the minister's statement is true? He is going on alleging that a particular minister has said that.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : If a reply is given after an examination of the record, how, can you question it?

SHRI SAMAR GUHA : I am coming to that.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Regarding the contradiction I will raise a point of order. The question refers to a statement made in the West Bengal Council on the 19th March by the West Bengal Food Minister. The hon. Minister said that they had obtained a copy of that statement which is laid on the Table and that it did not contain any such statement. The statement which is laid on the Table of the House was made not in the Council but in the Legislative Assembly not on the 19th March but on the 13th March. So, it is not that statement at all which is referred to in the question. He is misleading the House completely.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : How does the hon. Minister explain this apparent contradiction?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM) : On what Shri Indrajit Gupta has pointed out I was going to intervene myself. We got the statement that was made by the Food Minister of West Bengal in the Assembly. I understand that the statement was placed in the Council also. I have tried to get the record of the proceedings of the West Bengal Legislative Council but we have not received it as yet. However, I will

make one thing quite clear. At no stage I said that because West Bengal was a deficit State the consumption *per capita* or per adult should be 13 ounces or so. What I said, as has been stated in the reply, when they said that their requirements was 62 lakh tonnes based on 16 ounces consumption per day *per capita*, was that everywhere we take the adult equivalent of the total population and then calculate the requirement of food-grains in that area. The adult equivalent of the total population will be 84 per cent ; that is the yardstick and on that basis we will have to take the consumption requirement of that State.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA : The position remains as it is. In my question I have referred only to the statement which had been made in the Council and not in the Legislative Assembly. It is not necessary that he should make the same statement in the Legislative Assembly and in the Council ; it is not necessary that its language and everything will be the same. Therefore the whole reply to part (a) is totally irrelevant. If the Government thought that the statement was incorrect or that at no time such a statement was made by the Food Minister, it was the duty of this Government to issue a contradiction as soon as such a statement was published in almost all the papers of West Bengal. That has not been done.

Now, my question is whether it is a fact that the Indian Medical Council, after continued research for many years, has come to the conclusion that a balanced diet for an adult should constitute 14 ounces of cereals, 3 ounces of pulses, 10 ounces of vegetables and 10 ounces of other foods like meat and fish type of proteins and that in the absence of vegetable proteins at least 5 ounces of pulses should be given. That means, if the cereals are not supplemented by pulses, vegetables and meat or fish type of proteins, the calculation of 16 ounces per head of cereals should be taken. I want to know whether the Government knows that in West Bengal, particularly in the industrial area, the tea garden area and the rural area, our people have meagre quantities of vegetables and have no pulses at all. Therefore, this is absolutely essential even according to the report of the Council. Even on that basis,

he requires 16 ounces of cereals. May I know whether the Government is going to accept the calculation on the basis of 16 ounces at least for the labourers, the workers and the peasants of West Bengal ?

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : There are various norms worked out by the medical people as to what should be the balanced diet. As I have already said, we have been calculating according to the availability of cereals an adult equivalent of the entire population as 84 per cent of the total population and providing roughly 16 ounces for an adult equivalent availability. Apart from that, I am sure, the hon. Member is aware that the movement of cereals other than rice and wheat is free from most parts of the country. He is also aware that a large quantity of maize, grams, barley, bajra and jowar is going to West Bengal in order to supplement the food requirements of the working classes. By this method, I have succeeded in containing the price of rice in West Bengal which had never happened in the history of West Bengal. To see that the price of rice falls during the months of August, September and October is a rare phenomenon. And the price of rice has fallen. It has always been my effort to send as much of different foodgrains as possible to West Bengal so that the rice prices do not rise and the working classes get sufficient quantity of foodgrains apart from rice and wheat. And they have become available.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA : The course of floods in West Bengal has turned out to be blessing to agriculturists of West Bengal because they have learnt the technique of having high-yielding variety crops twice a year. The West Bengal Government, at the time of the President's Rule, adopted a plan to make West Bengal self-sufficient in food production by 1971. The present West Bengal Government also has accepted that plan. I want to know whether the Central Government is going to help the West Bengal Government by advancing necessary funds, fertiliser, agro-industrial equipment and other necessary requirements for increasing food production and also, in view of the fact that production of pulses is 10 million tonnes in our country of which human consumption is 7 million

tonnes and, according to the report of the Medical Research Council, at least the pulses production should be three times, whether the Government is going to help the West Bengal Government and also other states in increasing the production of pulses at least by three times.

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : We have been assisting the West Bengal Government so that they are in a position to implement the high-yielding variety programme. In fact, during one year, there has been almost two to three-fold increase in high-yielding variety programme of paddy and wheat also, from 68,000 acres to 1,60,000 acres this year. We have been helping all the State Governments in carrying out the high-yielding variety programme. We have taken special pains to see that West Bengal Government is helped in carrying out the programme. Our policy approach will continue to be the same.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : The food problem is a disturbing one and the hon. Minister's statement has created more disturbance to it. What the hon. Minister has placed on the Table of the House is not the relevant statement that has been made on the 19th March, 1969 in West Bengal Council by the West Bengal Food Minister, Mr. Sudhir Kumar. It seems that statement stands. Simply by making a denial by another hon. Minister, it cannot go away. So, we presume this very statement of the Union Food Minister, Mr. Jagjiwan Ram, against the people of West Bengal is absolutely unconstitutional and highly objectionable. The Union Food Minister should know that the people of Bengal will not allow this sort of statement, any longer. They have been kept starved for longer days. It would be impossible to keep them starved for very long period. In this connection I would like to know whether the Union Food Minister will consider having a national food policy, an all-India food policy without considering the States' food production differently because the Indian total production is an integrated effort of the country as a whole. A particular State may not have adequate food production but sufficient other resources to supplement and keep the country's development to earn foreign exchange.

Take for example, West Bengal. West Bengal has been earning 30-35 per cent of the total foreign exchange of the country by tea, jute, coal, tobacco and minerals. It makes its useful contribution to the country. I would like to have a clear answer from the Government : whether the Central Government would take up the full responsibility to feed the people of West Bengal and whether 24 lakh tonnes of food demanded by the United Front Government will be given to them very shortly. If not, is the Central Government prepared to forgo all foreign exchange earnings that come from West Bengal, to meet its own food demand ?

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : I fail to understand the reasoning over which the hon. Members has waxed eloquent. I am afraid perhaps he is not aware of the food situation in West Bengal. (*Interruption*)

I am sorry he is not aware of the food situation in West Bengal. I would like him to go to his constituency and ascertain what that the price of rice per killo is. Whether in the history of West Bengal or in the recent past rice price was so low as this season...(*Interruption*). Let me answer now. They have brought in so many factors which are not quite relevant to the question now. There is no relevance about foreign exchange earnings on tea or things like that. The land being diverted from cash crops does not arise. That will arise of course in a situation which existed in West Bengal in 1967 or 1968.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : How nicely you have engineered it !

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : Here is a sample of food scarcity in West Bengal. (*Interruption*) I was going to say that at no stage have I stated that a State if it is deficit, should consume less. I repeat that, but at the same time I will again say that no State should demand much higher national average. The State Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister saw the point and, therefore, in our discussions, they agreed that after the final figures of production are available, we will review the entire position in the month of May or so. At present fortunately the position in West Bengal is comfortable and very easy and even in West Bengal, the Government have their stocks more than 4 lakhs tonnes of

foodgrains, cereales, rice and wheat by the end of Febuary. There is no reason to have a any anxiety on the food problem as far as West Bengal is concerned. It is very comfortable and very easy.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA : This is a very basic question and a fundamental question that is posed. It has been recorded in the *Hindustan Standard* a few days ago.

Mr. Kumar who was replying to one-hour food debate in the Council hoped that the Opposition would not lag behind to support the food policy as they were doing now.

The controversial subject gave Mr. Kumar an opportunity to lash out at the Centre for its unhelpful and unsympathetic attitude to the state. The Front Members cried 'Shame ; Shame' and the Opposition Members protested when Mr. Kumar regretted the attitude of the Union Food Minister, Mr. Jagjiwan Ram who was quoted as saying that the people of Bengal had no right to take more than 13.2 oz. of cereals a day since the State was deficit in foodgrains.

Sir, this is a fundamental question. Does the hon. Member think.....(*Interruption*)

AN HON. MEMBER : Let him go to the Supreme Court and have it decided.....

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA : This is disorderly and this is discriminatory. Even the All India Institute of Medical Sciences has conducted a survey and it has been stated that more than crores of people in the country are sick population and this is the policy being pursued by this Government of the India for the last 21 years. There is a policy enunciated in the Constitution, which finds a place in the Directive Principles of our Constitution that we have to create a healthy citizen in a healthy democracy. What steps have the Government of India taken? What right has this Government of India got to give statements like that given out by Shri Jagjiwan Ram, which statement is clearly discriminatory in respect

of foodgrains to West Bengal? Will the Government of India evolve a food policy without any discrimination irrespective of the party in the power at the States, to evolve a national policy, to give adequate food to every State irrespective of party affiliations of the Governments of these States? Will such a thing be done, so that we may have healthy citizen in a healthy democracy?

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : Does it require any answer? (*Interruption*)

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA : I want an answer. The Minister has said in his Statement that West Bengal is not entitled to more than 13.2 oz. of cereals. Why should he discriminate against West Bengal? I want to know whether the Government of India have consulted the All-India Medical Institute. Why should there be any discriminatory treatment for West Bengal? The Statement has not been denied by the hon. Food Minister. Therefore, I want a categorical answer. Is it the policy of this Government to make such discrimination?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The Question was about the Statement made by the hon. Food Minister. He has explained the position. Now, how does question pertaining to average and all that arise out of it?

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA : There are the Directive Principles. (*Interruption*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : It does not arise out of this.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA : About National Food policy, he has asked a question and let that be answered. There is the quota for West Bengal. The Food Minister himself stated about it. At least that part of his question may be answered. That is about national policy regarding West Bengal That should be answered. (*Interruption*)

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA : Government is incapable of handling the situation. They have no answer. So, I presume that they are in capable of handling the situation. Shall I presume that this Government is pursuing a discriminatory policy?

SHRI D. N. TIWARY : It is a strange phenomenon that even when a Minister denies to have said such a thing, the question is again pursued. May I know from the Hon. Minister whether the States are treated on a par or whether they are treated differently and if so which are the States which get largest supplies and which are the States getting lower supplies ?

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : I have got figures of all-India availability from 1964 onwards. In 1964 the all-India availability was 14.07 ; in 1965—14.55 ; in 1966—12.52 ; in 1967—12.12 ; and in 1968—14.1.

SHRI D. N. TIWARY : Is there difference between State and State ?

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : There are differences. But the all-India average is this.

SHRI D. N. TIWARY : Which State gets the lowest and which State gets the highest ?

SHRI H. N. MUKERJEE : Upto now we have been used to getting information regarding per capita availability or per capita requirement either on Government account or by institutes like the one in Coonoor. Every time the calculation has been on per capita basis. For the first time now the Minister has come forward to say that on this occasion the calculation was made on the basis of per adult. Following the question asked by my friend Shri Tiwari, may I know whether this is a departure from the usual norms in regard to availability of food and and, if so, why this departure has taken place now ?

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : There has been no departure. Sixteen ounces are per adult. When we take population, it includes children six months old, nine months old, one year old and two years old. So, the basis has always been to calculate the adult equivalent of the total population.

SHRI H. N. MUKERJEE : This is what we want to know. This is a new basis of calculation. As far as I know, we are accustomed to per capita consumption,

per capita production or availability or requirement. For the first time in this country the Minister has come forward with per adult availability. Is it not happening for the first time and in that case why has it happened in the case of a State which has some grievance ?

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : Per capita availability is not 16 ounces. Per capita availability is lower. When we take 16 ounces availability per adult, 14 per cent has to be deducted to arrive at the figure for the total population. The adult equivalent will have to be calculated. There is nothing new in that. We take the average per capita consumption. Then we go on the basis of 16 ounces per adult.

DR. RANEN SEN : The whole dispute has started between the Central Government and the West Bengal Government over how much production of rice and other foodgrains has taken place in West Bengal. This was the beginning of the dispute. The stand of the Government of India was that the production of foodgrains was quite sufficient for the State of West Bengal. May I know whether the Central Government has got any mechanism to find out how much production has taken place in West Bengal, apart from the figures supplied by the West Bengal Government ? If the Central Government has no such mechanism, why should not the Central Government accept the figures given by the State Government and try to fulfil the commitment as much as possible ?

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : At no stage have I or anybody else on behalf of Government said that the production in West Bengal is such this year that they will not require any assistance. It is entirely incorrect to say that. We have not said it.

So far as the production of foodgrains is concerned, we took the production figures of the West Bengal Government. The difficulty is that in West Bengal itself there is a difference of calculation between the Agriculture Department and the Food Department as regards food production. Then again, as regards the summer crops, the average of three years has been taken by West Bengal Govt. This will

not work because this year there has been a new revolutionary development in West Bengal with Taichung paddy and also with wheat cultivation. There is a wheat revolution there ; just 40 miles from Calcutta, the crop in the area cultivated is as good as that in Punjab.

So I said that after we have some figures about the summer cereal production of rice and wheat, we will again review the situation in May. So there is no question of dispute about the quantity of foodgrains production; there was none. As a matter of fact, in all these calculations I assumed the figures as supplied by the West Bengal Government. But as I said, at present there is no cause for anxiety so far as the food position in West Bengal is concerned. The Chief Minister, the Deputy Chief Minister and Food Minister agreed that we will review the situation again in May.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : In view fact that the compound growth rate of agriculture in West Bengal and Assam has been one of the lowest, and the per acre yield in West Bengal has been one of the lowest, and loans from Government funds or other institutions for minor irrigation in West Bengal have been nil as against the total outlay of Rs. 256 crores—for Assam it has been only Rs. 70 lakhs—may I request the hon. Minister to tell us whether till we have come up to a really good standard in production, he will draw up a national food budget so as to save us from all botheration and worry ?

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : I do not know why every time the question of a national food budget comes up. Our efforts will be to encourage agriculture in West Bengal.....

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : We know that !

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : It has already started. I have no doubt that after

one or two years Shri Basu will offer some rice to other States from this surplus.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : Why is no help given to West Bengal and Assam ? Why is it that the allocation for minor irrigation to West Bengal is nil ? Why does he want to play politics in this matter ?

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : No politics.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : Nothing but politics. What right has he to play politics with food ?

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : I never play politics with food.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : Out of a total investment of Rs. 256 crores for different government-sponsored projects, not a single paisa has gone to West Bengal for minor irrigation. As I have said, the compound growth rate of agriculture in Bengal and Assam which is contiguous to it has been one of the lowest. There is politics in this. The per acre yield is one of the lowest in Bengal and Assam. What are you talking about ? (*Interruptions*).

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : If he will listen with a little patience, he will hear some sound advice.

SHRI RANDHIR SINGH : How does the hon. Member behave like a brute ? (*Interruptions*).

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : Let him hold his tongue, small man.....

SHRI RANDHIR SINGH : If he does not behave, I will make him behave (*Interruptions*).

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : I have said that we will have to encourage minor irrigation and production of high-yielding varieties in West Bengal. That is the only answer to the problem of food in West Bengal.

SHRI TENNETI VISHWANATHAM : Instead of irrigation, there is already irritation on both sides. There should not be irritation. Is the Minister aware that after independence we have invested nearly Rs. 2400 crores on the import of food-grains while we have put in only about Rs. 1700 crores on irrigation, and that is the cause of all this irritation? Will he make common cause with the Minister of Irrigation and get more finance to increase our output of cereals? This question relates particularly to West Bengal. I come from Andhra Pradesh. Most of us are interested in rice and the answer is about cereals. There is a difference between rice and cereals. We are a rice-eating population and we want to know what is the supply you are giving to West Bengal, Andhra, Maharashtra or any other State.

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : I have already mentioned the availability of cereals. The break-up will depend upon the dietetic habits of the people, availability etc. So far as minor irrigation is concerned, we are trying to give the highest priority to it everywhere in the country.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Complaints Re. payment of royalty against Mine-owners in Mysore State

*902. **DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR :** Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND MINES AND METALS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received some complaints regarding the payment of royalty against some mine-owners in Chikka Nai Kananall taluk in Tumkur District and Hiriyur, Hosadurga taluks in Mysore State ;

(b) if so, whether any inquiry has been conducted in this regard ; and

(c) if so, the result of the inquiry and the action taken or proposed to be taken in each case ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN
THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND
CHEMICALS AND MINES AND

METALS (SHRI JAGANATH RAO) : (a) to (c). No such complaints have been received by the Central Government. The Mysore Government, who are responsible for the collection of royalty, have, however, reported that there were some stray complaints regarding transport of ore without payment of royalty which were looked into and that the amounts due are being received by them.

नेपाल से भारत को पाकिस्तानी माल की तस्करी

*905. **श्री राम स्वरूप विद्यार्थी :**
श्री नारायण स्वरूप शर्मा :
कुमारी कमला कुमारी :

क्या वित्त मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) कलकत्ता बन्दरगाह से होकर अनुमानतः कितनी कीमत का पाकिस्तानी माल प्रतिवर्ष नेपाल भेजा जाता है ;

(ख) क्या यह सब है कि पाकिस्तान से नेपाल भेजे गये उसी माल को ही चोरी छिपे भारत लाया जाता है ; और

(ग) इस तस्करी को रोकने के लिए सरकार द्वारा क्या कार्यवाही की जा रही है ?

वित्त मन्त्रालय में राज्य मन्त्री (श्री प्र० चं० सेठी) : (क) पिछले दो वर्षों में कलकत्ता बन्दरगाह के जरिए नेपाल ने कोई पाकिस्तानी माल आयात नहीं किया ।

(ख) नेपाल से पाकिस्तानी माल के तस्कर-आयात का कोई मामला ध्यान में नहीं आया है ।

(ग) नेपाल से भारत में अन्य देश के माल के तस्कर-आयात को रोकने के उपायों को हड़-तर कर दिया गया है । अतिरिक्त गश्ती निरो-