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THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(Part I—Questions and Answers)
OFFICIAL REPORT

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HOUSE OF THE PEOPLE

Monday, 11th August, 1952

The House met at a Quarter Past
Eight of the Clock.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Short Notice Questions and Answers

DROUGHT AND FLOODS IN BIHAR

Shri S. N. Das: Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that while over a very large part of South Bihar continued drought is prevailing, a very large portion of North Bihar has been devastated by floods twice during a period of two months;

(b) if so, what is the extent of damage caused to crops both by drought and floods in the respective areas giving the names of the districts affected in each case;

(c) whether any report on the present food situation prevailing in those areas has been received by Government;

(d) whether the Government of Bihar has sought any help from the Centre; and

(e) if so, whether any help has been given or is proposed to be given to relieve the distress?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kildwal): (a) and (b). According to recent report from the Bihar Government, paddy seedlings in Patna, Gaya, Shahabad, Monghyr and parts of Hazaribagh have withered for lack of rain, the area affected by drought being about 18 thousand square miles covering a population of 1.25 crores. In North Bihar large area in the districts of Darbhanga and Saharsa, amounting to one thousand square
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miles has again been affected by Kosi floods. The population seriously affected is estimated at 5 lakhs. The Bihar Government have stated that it is too early as yet to attempt an estimate of the extent of damage by floods and by drought, but there is no doubt that in the flood affected areas, at any rate, the autumn crops have been very seriously damaged.

(c) Detailed report from the Bihar Government is awaited but the information already available shows that there are sufficient stocks at present with the Government of Bihar to meet the immediate needs. There is, however, a general rise in the price of rice.

(d) and (e). The Bihar Government have asked for the following quantities of foodgrains in the last few days:

Rice	5,000 tons
Wheat	20,000 tons
Milo	6,000 tons

Arrangements to supply these have been made, and the Centre is in a position to supply Bihar with the required foodgrains to enable it to feed the people. The Bihar Government have also requested that they may be supplied Milo at the rate of Rs. 9/- per maund, for distribution in the distress areas, and that the pool price of wheat supplied by the Centre may be so adjusted that it may be saleable by Bihar at Rs. 19/- per maund. These requests are under consideration.

Shri S. N. Das: May I know, Sir, what are the steps that have been taken to relieve the distress of the population living in those areas?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri M. V. Krishnappa): Regarding relief measures, we are awaiting details. Regarding the food they have asked for, I have already given the figures, namely, 5,000 tons of rice, 20,000 tons of wheat and 6,000 tons of milo; and we have made arrange-

ments for the transport of these food-grains to Bihar. Regarding concessions, the Bihar Government also requested that they may be supplied Milo at the rate of Rs. 9/- per maund for distribution in the distress areas. It is under consideration.

Shri S. N. Das: May I know whether the cheap grain shops which ceased to function in those areas have been reopened?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: The idea of asking for the concession rate of Rs. 9/- per maund for Milo is to open cheap grain shops.

Shri S. N. Das: I want to know whether in those areas cheap grain shops have been started again?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: We are not aware of that. We are awaiting the detailed report.

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know, Sir, whether fresh sowing planting of paddy has been arranged in the areas affected by the floods?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: We have no information.

Shri L. N. Mishra: With reference to part (a) of the question, may I know whether it is a fact that drought in certain parts of Bihar and flood in Saharsa and Darbhanga Districts have become a regular annual feature in Bihar?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: We cannot take it as a regular annual feature. They occur whenever nature is against us.

Shri L. N. Mishra: Instead of taking such piece-meal steps, do Government propose to take some concrete steps on a planned basis to end the trouble of flood in the north and drought in the south Bihar?

Shri Kidwai: Will he repeat his question?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: He wants to know if permanent measures would be undertaken to see that the ravages by floods do not take place. It is a suggestion for action.

Shri S. N. Das: May I know whether any arrangements have been made for the supply of paddy seedlings if rains occur now?

Shri Kidwai: That depends upon when the rains occur. The Kisan himself does whatever is possible.

Shri L. N. Mishra: May I know whether it is a fact that a large number of pumping sets are lying at the district headquarters in Bihar and are not being supplied to agriculturists who are anxious to have them?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: I want notice.

Shri S. C. Samanta: Is it a fact that the areas affected this year were affected last year also? If so, what are the permanent arrangements that have been made? Whether the question of cottage industries and the like has been taken up by the Government?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: That is what another hon. Member asked.

Shri Kidwai: Flood is not always a calamity. Whenever rivers are flooded, the next crop is always a bumper crop.

FOOD SUBSIDY

Shri Mohiuddin: Will the Minister for Food and Agriculture be pleased to refer to the statement laid on the Table of the House in answer to starred question No. 337 asked on the 2nd June 1952 regarding subsidy of 15-81 crores paid in 1951-52 to States on imported food-stuffs and state;

(a) whether the Central Government had paid to States in the same year any additional amount as subsidy on foodgrains procured in India; and

(b) if the answer to part (a) above be in the affirmative, whether the Government will state the amount of additional subsidy paid (state-wise)?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): (a) No subsidy is paid by the Central Government on foodgrains procured locally by the State Governments. The Government of India, however, subsidises the supply of imported foodgrains to the States. The total subsidy borne by the Government of India in 1951-52 was Rs. 52-63 crores including Rs. 15-81 crores paid in cash to the State Governments.

(b) Does not arise, as no subsidy is paid on a locally procured grain.

Shri Mohiuddin: Rupees 15-81 crores are said to be paid in cash. May I know the system of payment