

whom are Ayurvedic specialists and one is an allopathic doctor.

Shri T. K. Chaudhuri: Apart from Doctors or Ayurvedic experts, I want to know specifically the number of pharmacognosts and pharmaceutical chemists.

Shrimati Chandrasekhar: I have no information as to that.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The Question hour is over.

Some Hon. Members: No no; we started at 10 o'clock today.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I am sorry; anyhow, this question is over. Mr. Balmiki, not in his seat. Mr. K. P. Tripathi.

IMPORT OF ORANGES AND POTATOES OF KHASI HILLS

*1172. **Shri K. P. Tripathi:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether due to intensification of boycott of import of oranges and potatoes of Khasi Hills by Pakistan, the growers in the border region are in distress;

(b) if so, what relief measures Government propose to take in the matter; and

(c) what long term plan, if any, Government have drawn up for such contingencies in this area?

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): (a) The producers of oranges and potatoes are experiencing difficulties in marketing their produce owing to dislocation of established markets consequent on partition.

(b) and (c). A team of experts on refrigeration was sent to Assam recently to explore means of profitable disposal of oranges and potatoes grown in the Khasi Hills. Certain immediate and long term measures have been suggested in their report which are under consideration of Government.

Shri K. P. Tripathi: What are the immediate steps taken by the Government to relieve the difficulties?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: No steps have so far been taken; but they will be taken as soon as possible.

Shri K. P. Tripathi: Are Government aware of the conditions in which the people are living almost on roots for the time being?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: It has been reported that there is much distress.

Shri Sarmah: What are the immediate measures recommended by this expert team?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: The main recommendations made in the report are as follows:

(i) Establishment of a grading and juice extraction Centre and intensification of air lift of the first grade fruits to Calcutta; (ii) Establishment of a cold storage warehouse and fruit and vegetable processing factory at Gauhati; this schemes is estimated to cost 14 lakhs of rupees; (iii) the provision of increased transport facilities by road, rail and river and reduction in the freight charges for perishables.

Shri Sarmah: What measures are taken in respect of the recommendation for immediate steps, namely, air lift and transport facilities?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: As I said in my reply, the matter is under consideration of Government.

Shri K. P. Tripathi: May we understand that no steps have been taken till now in spite of the fact that last year there was air lift and no air lift has taken place this year?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: The whole situation has arisen only recently. So far as this year is concerned, there has not been sufficient time to implement those recommendations. They will be implemented as early as possible.

Shri Sarmah: In view of the fact that oranges are perishable commodities and the season is very short in the border of Khasi Hills, how long will Government take in consideration and coming to a decision?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): Last year and year before last, we were asked by the Assam Government to arrange for air lift and it was done. This year, such a request was not received. When the Prime Minister came back from Assam, he spoke to me and he also sent a committee. He said something must be done to give relief to the orange growers and potato growers. Immediately, we sent an officer. We are immediately undertaking a refrigeration plant and other things so that losses may not occur again.

Shri K. P. Tripathi: Is it a fact that Pakistan has recently stopped all trade between India and Pakistan in the Khasi border, and if so whether still limestone is being allowed to pass into Pakistan for the preparation of

cement? In view of the fact that they have stopped all trade, are the Government considering the stoppage of the passage of limestone to Pakistan until the trade reopens?

Shri Kidwai: That I don't know, but I know that Pakistan has restricted its imports recently from all countries. They have put an import duty of 36 per cent. on oranges, and therefore, the orange trade is completely stopped.

Shri K. P. Tripathi rose.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: It is all argumentative.

Shri S. C. Deb: Is the hon. Minister aware of the condition of the orange growers in Lushai-Hills and do the Government propose to do something to afford relief to the growers there?

Shri K. G. Deshmukh: Have Government any idea of the quantity of the oranges that are grown in this area?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: The value of the produce in these districts is estimated to be in the neighbourhood of Rs. 2½ crores.

Shrimati Khosla: The hon. Minister said that no request was received by the Government. May I enquire whether the Prime Minister had not received a number of representations to this effect?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: This has already been replied to. The Prime Minister had seen the situation when he went there, and it was on his suggestion that all these steps have been taken.

WILLINGDON HOSPITAL, DELHI

*1174. **Shrimati Benu Chakravarty:** (a) Will the Minister of Health be pleased to state whether the Willingdon Hospital, Delhi, is to be taken over by the Central Government and if so, for what purposes?

(b) What are the financial commitments of Government on this account?

The Deputy Minister of Health (Shrimati Chandrasekhar): (a) Yes, such a proposal is under consideration in order to implement a scheme of expansion of the Hospital and Nursing Home which forms part of the Five Year Plan of the Central Government. It is also proposed to make use of the Hospital for the purpose of a Contributory Health Service Scheme for Central Government Servants which has been approved by the Government of India.

(b) The financial implications of the proposal are being examined.

Shrimati Benu Chakravarty: How many beds will be added to the Hospital after it has been taken over?

Shrimati Chandrasekhar: I have no idea.

Shrimati Benu Chakravarty: How many of these will be reserved for treatment of Class III and Class IV servants of the Government of India?

Shrimati Chandrasekhar: It has not yet been decided.

Shrimati Benu Chakravarty: May we know whether the Municipality at all agreed to give it over to the Central Government?

Shrimati Chandrasekhar: I think they have agreed to hand it over to the Central Government.

Shrimati Benu Chakravarty: When do you propose to take it over?

Shrimati Chandrasekhar: Things are under consideration now.

Shrimati Benu Chakravarty: What are the special facilities to be added to this Hospital?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): Whatever is necessary.

Shrimati Chandrasekhar: The number of beds will be increased, and some other improved facilities will be offered.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: It is too premature. Taking over is the first thing. Adding to the facilities is the next step.

Shrimati Benu Chakravarty: I thought it was part of the plan.

Shri B. S. Murthy: Is it the intention of the Government to make this a model hospital for the whole of India?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: These are all hypothetical matters.

Dr. Rama Rao: May I know why the Central Government want to ask the Delhi Government and the Delhi Municipal Corporation for their hospital instead of building their own new hospital?

Shrimati Chandrasekhar: In 1949, the Government of India considered that the capacity and the facilities of the Willingdon Hospital and the Nursing Home should be increased as there was a growing demand. They thought