

these laws, but also of the society which should play an effective role and give its co-operation in this regard. It is only then that society can make progress and bidi workers are benefited. We not only want bidi workers but also other workers as well to make progress—whether they are Government employees or are employed elsewhere—and it should be the responsibility of everybody to safeguard everybody else's interests.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE-CONTD.

[English]

Notification under Customs Act

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : I beg to lay on the Table copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under section 159 of the Custom's Act, 1962 :—

- (1) Notification No. 254/86-Customs published in Gazette of India dated the 17th April, 1986 together with an explanatory memorandum regarding exemption to sponge iron and hot briquetted iron when imported for use in intergrated steel plates from basic customs duty in excess of 5 per cent *advalorem* and from the whole of the additional duty of customs leviable thereon.
- (2) Notification No. 255/86 Customs published in Gazette of India dated the 17th April, 1986 together with an explanatory memorandum regarding exemption to hot briquetted iron (HBI) when imported by or on behalf of an electric arc furnace unit from basic customs duty in excess of 5 per cent *advalorem* and from the whole of the additional duty of customs leviable thereon.
- (3) Notification No. 256/86-Customs published in Gazette of India dated the 17th April, 1986 together with an explanatory memorandum regarding exemption to goods covered by Notification Nos. 254/86-Customs and 255/86-Customs dated the 17th

April, 1986 from auxiliary duty of customs in excess of 25 per cent *ad valorem*.

- (4) Notification No. 257/86-Customs published in Gazette of India dated the 17th April, 1986 together with an explanatory memorandum regarding exemption to soda ash from basic customs duty in excess of 25 per cent *ad valorem*. [Placed in Library See No. LT-25/6/86]

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

10.81 hrs.

Management of Foodgrains by the food Corporation of India

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now we take up the half-an-hour discussion.

Kumari Mamata Banerjee.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE (Jadavpur): I am really grateful to our hon Speaker, Dr. Bal Ram Jakhar because he has given me this opportunity to initiate this discussion. The Food Corporation of India has lost Rs. 620 crores in five years from 1981-81 to 1984-85 in transit and storage. Not only myself from this side but members from that side also are very much concerned about the functioning of the FCI.

The Food Corporation of India was set up in 1965 with some specific responsibility. But now what is the condition of this corporation? We are all very much concerned because of the mismanagement, loss in transit, wastage, corruption and inefficiency of the Food Corporation of India. Millions of people are now suffering due to the negligence of the FCI.

I am really pained to find that when 35% of our population is now living below the poverty line, we see this FCI is wasting foodgrains. Our Prime Minister emphatically stated that all public department agencies and the Government undertakings should revitalise themselves and they should take proper action to evolve poverty allevi-

[*Kumari Mamata Banerjee*]

ation programmes. But really we are sorry to say that this FCI has totally failed to look after the interests of the common people. It is the duty of the FCI. It has emerged over the years as the agency of procurement, storage, export and distribution and handling foodgrains also and it is the duty of the Food Corporation to ensure that the poor people get foodgrains at fair price from the fair price shops. But we are sorry to say that not only in my State but all over the country people are suffering because it is the FCI's duty to ensure that people get good quality foodgrains. But in every State you can find which type of foodgrains people are getting. It is bad quality foodgrains. Even in my own State broken rice mixed with stones is sold. Then with regard to kerosene, you do not get it and if you are prepared to pay a higher price, it is easily available. Then what is the need, what is the necessity to set up this FCI ?

Any failure of the Corporation set up by the Central Government must be a matter of concern because people in villages are very much associated with this. So I would like to know from the hon Minister, I am really hopeful and I do hope that this new Minister will take proper steps....

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA :
Also the new Mg. Director of FCI.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE
(Andaman and Nicobar Islands) Yes, the new Mg. Director. I hope they will take proper steps to improve the working of the FCI. We have to see an efficient FCI, not a corrupt FCI. It is said that ten lakh tonnes of food grains have been eaten away by rats. I do not know by what type of rats. Is it FCI management rat or anti-social rat or 'inefficiency rat'? It is people who ultimately suffer. It is the duty of the FCI to protect the interests of the people and not to protect themselves. If the management is irresponsible, then the field workers also will be irresponsible. Our Minister should find out why the FCI is running in losses. We are very much concerned about this : not only myself, but every Member of this House is concerned about this.

Food is a basic necessity and in view of the new thrust on providing speedy relief to the weaker sections, the Corporation has a special responsibility towards the society. Members of Parliament are very much concerned about the procurement stage because procurement is a crucial factor and if appropriate care is not taken, it is bound to have an adverse effect. It is the Minister's duty to see that procurement is done properly. We are also very much concerned about the storage and the distribution system. The distribution system is not working well. It is the duty of the Government to distribute foodgrains to the poor people, the tribal people and people belonging to the weaker sections, but they are not getting foodgrains properly. It is the duty of the Government to attend to procurement, storage and distribution of foodgrains. There should be surprise-checks and proper supervision and speedy action to remove the bottlenecks.

I have already stated that Government has evolved programmes to help the needy. Food is the most important factor in the fight against poverty. If the public distribution agencies are found wanting, many a welfare project will go away. This has its own lesson to convey.

I would like to ask some important questions. We are aware that the Food Corporation of India has the responsibility to supply foodgrains to the Fair Price Shops through the State Governments. But there must be some fixed responsibility as people are not concerned whether the supply is made by the FCI or by the State Government. I know the position in my State, I have also discussed with some Delhi people. They are also complaining that for about four years they have been fighting against supply of bad quality of foodgrains; the Food Corporation is supplying this type of foodgrains. In my State you will be surprised to know what type of foodgrains people are getting; as I have already stated the people there are getting broken rice, rice mixed with stone-pieces. If you go to the Fair Price Shop on Monday, they will say that rice is available but wheat is not available; and if you go on Wednesday, they will say that rice is available but sugar is not available ; if you go on Friday, they

will say that wheat is available but rice is not available. If rice, wheat and sugar are not available, then where is the need to have these Fair Price Shops? In my State we have given so many complaints to our State Government also, but we do get any reaction, there is no effect. Our Minister should find out and make it clear to the State Government as to what is its responsibility on this.

I have a few suggestions to make to our Minister.

1. There must be proper procurement of foodgrains of good quality, and no one should pressurise FCI officials for accepting any inferior quality grain.

2. There must be proper arrangement of storage and all storage godowns must be inspected by the senior officials and stern action should be taken against anybody responsible for loss of foodgrains.

3. Transit losses must be stopped by constituting a high power committee comprising officials of the Food Corporation, State Governments concerned, Department of Railways and the Surface Transport as well as the Truck Owners' Association to stop wastage and losses in transit.

4. The State Government machinery should be strengthened immediately and the State Governments should be made directly responsible to Central Government for failure to supply good quality foodgrains to the Fair Price Shops for distribution to consumers.

5. There must be at least one Fair Price Shop for every 2000 population and I want to know which are the States which have defaulted in making arrangements for such Fair Price Shops.

6. There must be proper supervision for supply of foodgrains to the tribal areas and for the people in the rural areas.

I would like to say that our Government is not doing well regarding these activities. Our Government has set up these FCI not to revive themselves; but to revive activities and make achievements. Now, some officials of FCI are totally corrupt and

are not interested for the common people. They are trying to malign our Government. So, it is the duty of the Minister to look after all these things and to take proper action.

The Minister has already stated in his reply that 6465 FCI workers will be retrenched. The Government has approved the retrenchment of the entire force of 6465 departmental labourers of the Food Corporation of India working at major ports due to drastic reduction in the handling costs. This is what the Food and Civil Supplies Minister Shri P. Shiv Shanker told the Rajya Sabha on 18th March. The imports and exports operations of FCI had shrunk in size considerably and the corporation had been incurring an expenditure of about Rs. 23 crore every year towards payment of idle wages to this almost surplus labour, the Minister said in a written reply.

Unemployment problem is a great problem in our country with the youth force increasing day by day. Unemployment is not only a problem of our country, but it is a problem all over the world also. When a lot of industries are going to be closed, when the central government recruitment is banned for a long time and when new recruitment is not going to take place, then why this Government is going to retrench 6400 workers. It is the duty of this Government to rehabilitate them in any way.

How are they going to retrench these workers? If the Government retrenches these workers, then where will they go? They will die. They are now starving. Then, the Minister will bother and the Department will bother. So, it is the duty of Government to save the families of these workers and the workers themselves. Otherwise we will be in a dangerous position and the country will be passing through a crucial time.

It is also my request to the Hon. Minister, I think the Minister will understand the problem of the people and their sentiments, to look after all these things, and to properly rehabilitate these workers also.

I would like to request the Minister to make the Food Corporation of India an efficient organisation. I think it is high time to take immediate action and bold action

[*Kumari Mamata Banerjee*]

against the corruption of the FCI, I am optimistic and hopeful that our new Minister and the new Management will look after all these things and will take bold action.

Sir, one thing is there. The Opposition must oppose but it must be constructive opposition. I have already said in the morning that Opposition may oppose if necessary but they should also appreciate certain things. I have seen in the newspapers that our Minister is taking some bold steps against Food Corporation of India. Our Minister is committed to take effective steps against Food Corporation of India but my point is that some time-limit should be there. If you are not going to do something early and take two-three years then people will suffer and become helpless. It is also your duty to take proper steps within some time-limit otherwise people will be hopeless.

Sir, I thank you and the hon. Speaker for giving me the chance to raise this question.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI A. K. PANJA) : Sir, I can well understand the feelings and sentiments expressed by the young lady Member regarding functioning of the Food Corporation of India. In fact, it is just a co-incidence that the Budget discussion started yesterday and today I also intervened and tried to answer some of the points and arguments made with some very cogent reasons by some of the Members. In fact, some of the facts stated by them were also correct. I have already stated so in my reply, which has not yet finished, but today Half-an-Hour discussion also came.

Sir, the first point emphasised by the hon. Member is regarding the transit losses. Several questions on this point have already been answered by me where the figures have been given. The first objective under the leadership of the Prime Minister and also my senior colleague was to identify and isolate the causes of the losses and wastages. While doing so the Members might be interested in some of the figures which I could give to the hon. Members.

While taking into consideration about the expenditure involved it is very much necessary to find out as the hon. Members will appreciate that there are certain items of expenditure which are within the control of the Government and there are certain other items which are beyond our control. For no moment I am standing here to support the deeds which are not expected from FCI but certainly some of the facts must be known to all.

So far as procurement incidental is concerned we have broken up the figures, namely, the items which could be controlled by the Government after identifying the factors of losses and items which are not within our control.

Here, I may give some figures for the information of the hon. Members. I have given in the morning the whole figures in regard to the loss in carrying the entire volume. If we analyse the procurement incidentals, the element of loss so far as wheat is concerned, the 'mandi' charges are Rs. 3.92. This is 1984-85 rate. The cost of gunny bag is Rs. 8.25, purchase/sales-tax is Rs. 5.09, interest charges are Rs. 2.71. These are beyond our control. We can control them by amending the 'mandi' Act and other things. But those exercises which we are now treating as items are not within our control.

Now, Sir, what are the items that are within our control? Now, 'mandi' labour charge in Rs. 1.17, forwarding charges are 50 paise, internal movement charge is Rs. 2.76, establishment charges Rs. 1.33, storage charges are 52 paise and others work out to six paise. So, Sir, the cost of procurement comes to a total of Rs. 26.31. If any hon. Member applies his mind, he will find that 76% of this is non-controllable, that is, beyond the control of the Government.

Let us now take the other average, that is, distribution cost-average pool for both wheat and rice. The handling charges are Rs. 3.51, storage charges are 2.97, freight charges are Rs. 17.17, interest charges are Rs. 18.20, administration overheads come to Rs. 3.16, transit and storage charges works out to Rs. 6.88. The total comes to Rs. 51.98. Sir, out of these, two are beyond

our control, that is, freight rate and interest rate. Freight charges shall have to be paid to the Railways and the interest charges shall have to be paid to the bank. Therefore, if you calculate, out of this amount of Rs. 51.98, 70% is non-controllable and out of the amount of Rs. 26.31, 76% is non-controllable. If you add Rs. 51.98 to Rs. 26.37, the total come to Rs. 78.20. The procurement price is Rs. 162. The total comes to Rs. 240.20. The issue price is Rs. 190. Therefore, from where will the balance money come? Sir, this amount of Rs. 50.20 had to be the subsidy figure. So, the total for the central issue price per quintal including procurement price comes to Rs. 240.20 and the issue price is Rs. 190. Therefore, hon. Members will appreciate that Rs. 50.20 is the subsidy figure and that is how the subsidy amount comes. Whatever the amount, we are trying to find ways and means to save whichever item is controllable. But we have to see how much they could be minimised keeping in view the better distribution system. We are not sitting quiet over this by saying that we are trying to find ways and means. I have already stated in the Budget discussion earlier when this point was emphasised. I wanted to give some specific figures. Now, what are the actions that we can immediately take? We can divide it into three categories. First, what could be done immediately to reduce these losses, whether in transit or in storage; two we have given priority for isolating and locating the controllable factors so that the cost could be minimised to the extent possible, and three, long draw-process which involves capital cost of having more storage facilities, having more covered wagons, having distribution in a scientific manner etc. These are the three categories under which action has to be taken.

We have started taking action on what could be done immediately and the results are encouraging. The purchase has to be within specifications. Everybody knows and hon. Members coming from various States would realise that sometimes for giving the farmers the best of the benefits, we are exposed to various types of pressures. Some arguments are made that 18 per cent moisture for paddy procurement should not be specified. It must be allowed to be higher. As presently advised by the scientists

and the research workers, if the moisture is more than 18 per cent, in storage the foodgrains would go bad quickly. If the moisture content is more than this, the foodgrains will become bad. We have issued specific instructions that whatever might be the local pressure from whatever quarter, the specifications as scientifically advised have to be maintained. For that reason, we are getting letters from several quarters and everybody is taking up the cause of the farmer. If the cause of the farmers has to be kept in mind on the hand, we cannot ignore the cause of one end users on the other. The foodgrains have to be stored and these are going to the poor people, the end users. We have to strike a golden means and the golden means is that 18 per cent specifications for moisture for paddy have to be maintained.

Even if these specifications are complied with, we have found that bag which can contain 95 kgs only is being packed with 100 kgs. forcibly. This is done by pressure. There is a resultant bleeding of the bags, the stitches come out and while in transit there is a loss of foodgrains. If we compare that with big countries, where everything is done by automation, that will not be a proper comparison. The reason is that lakhs of people are earning their bread and butter by working lawfully in FCI. It is not only the employees who are engaged, it is also the departmental workers, the daily paid workers who earn by their absolute sweat and blood, by carrying the foodgrains on the back, taking it out from the storage, putting in inside the lorry, taking it down to the railway station, again putting it in the wagons etc. We have to see in what perspective these all are being done.

Some hon. Members have been mentioning about storage of foodgrains in silos. Its cost is so much. Besides, the question of unemployment is also involved. We have to strike a golden means.

As I said, we have issued instructions that gunny bags should not be filled with 100 kgs; it has to be 93-95 kgs, so that the falling down of foodgrains is very low. We have also said that there must be machine stitching so that bleeding is as little as possible. All the steps are being

[*Shri A. K. Panja*]

taken gradually and we have noticed that the losses are coming down.

To the extent possible, we have allotted money for providing weighing machines. We have said that there should be a weighing machine at all depots with five thousand tonnes capacity or more capacity. We have not covered all the depots, but we are taking expeditious steps and we have allotted money for establishing of weighing machines.

Railways are the main source of transportation of foodgrains. As you know, Punjab, Haryana and UP are the three main growing areas. Kindly imagine that from Chandigarh or a remote area in Punjab, the railways are carrying foodgrains to Kanya Kumari on the one side and upto Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh. If open wagons are given for carrying the foodgrains, we suffer heavy losses. The figures are as follows. In 1982-83, 13.7 per cent were carried by open wagons. After arguing with the Railways, in 1983-84 it came down to 2.6 per cent. The position further improved in 1984-85 and with the cooperation of the Railway Ministry, it came down to 1.3 per cent. The reason is simply this. It is not as if there is an acute shortage of wagons. The entire movement takes place within 8 weeks because of the country's producing areas and climatic conditions. The entire operation starts on the Vaisakhi Day and it continues for about 8 weeks and the entire movement shall have to take place within that time. So, naturally, the problem of shortage arises and sometimes we have to yield to the real want of covered wagons and use open wagons.

Besides, administrative steps and security measures are being taken to ensure quality control and to check malpractices as far as possible. A new system of management called the Management of Information System in short MIS has been established for identifying heavy loss areas under the supervision of the new Chairman of the FCI along with the Department of Food and Civil Supplies. With this, we can minimise losses. We are having mechanised devices in certain places where huge amounts of foodgrains have to be stocked. These mechanised devices save a lot of foodgrain.

Bulk storage and transportation, regular verification of stocks, etc. are some of the steps that have been taken for the purpose of carrying these huge foodgrain stocks that are available.

The young member has talked about corruption. It is not as though we are not aware of it. But we have to move according to the law of the land. We have an established democracy here. But it is not correct to say that our Law is not capable of dealing with this problem. We have to be more alert. We are taking action and major, minor and total action is initiated against 16 Category I officers and the cases pending upto the end of January 1986 (major and minor) against Category I officers are 24. In category II, total number of cases in which action has been initiated is 123; and cases pending upto January 1986 are 251. In Category III, action initiated 357 and cases pending 556. In Category IV, number of cases initiated is 113 and cases pending 123. The total round up is like this. Number of cases where action has been initiated is 609 and the number of cases pending is 954. Along with this, in 1985, 76 officials including 2 Category I officers have been dismissed and removed or compulsorily retired from service. Another 42 officers are dismissed and removed, including 2 Category I officers. Under the FCI's Staff Regulation Act, the services of 20 employees are terminated and 24 persons retired.

As I said earlier, the difficulty is, we have to proceed according to the law established. We cannot act at random. After all, the guilty may escape but the innocent must not suffer. That is the established law of our country. We are not saying that all the guilty must escape. If we get hold of one innocent person and put him behind the bars or dismiss him, in my very respectful submission before you it would not be a good step at all and it will not help us. I have also asked our officers concerned to give due recognition to good officers and other employees by honouring them with certificate of merit and also awarding them prizes. We are going to hold an annual conference wherein such good officers and other employees are rewarded for their better functioning.

So far as West Bengal is concerned, the hon. member has raised the question of kerosene. I am very sorry to say one thing. I may clarify that I do not mean any offence to the members from West Bengal present here, I am not saying this because of any political bias. This is an unfortunate thing and I would like to bring it to their notice so that they can take it up immediately. We came to know from a very leading Bengali newspaper that kerosene is being sold in black market in various parts of Calcutta and also in some districts.

Two high-ranking officers were sent immediately. On the first day, they alone moved around, and identified areas where black-marketing was taking place. On the second day, they went with the State's officers. One month has passed. I have personally written a letter pointing this out to the hon. Chief Minister, and to the Food Minister. Unfortunately, not even a reply is there. It pains me that only the Private Secretary acknowledges my letter, to my Private Secretary. From Punjab, we get the reply immediately, within 48 hours of receipt. In Tripura, the Chief Minister himself writes within 48 hours of receipt. From Andhra Pradesh, the Chief Minister rings me up and tells me that he is taking steps, and that because of urgent work, it will take seven days for him to reply.

These are the points. It was found by the officer that openly in the streets of Calcutta, without fear for anybody, the officer from the Food Department went there. He was offered 30 litres of kerosene straightway at the black market price, while huge numbers were standing in the queue.

I am not blaming anybody. The difficulty is that the implementing machinery is not with us; it is with the State. If the State can do things according to at least what we have identified, it will be good. Firstly, they are complaining that the Central Government and the Food Corporation are not giving good food. I say: do reject it. We have said that joint inspection must be made, in the Food Corporation godowns. Have joint inspections. Give your certificates, and then give them to your distribution centres. If there is a failure there, then it will be very difficult. Well over 3 lakh fair price shops are there.

Unless each one in the whole family of this entire supply set-up performs the duty cast upon him, it will not be possible for one new Director or new Chairman coming in, to do things overlooking the entire FCI. After all, we have to deal with people who are working.

So, these are the items to be looked into by the State Government. Joint inspection takes place. One: we have offered joint inspections. Two: let there be surprise checks. Three: Please do take action. The West Bengal Government has stated that it will not take action under Preventive Detention Act. Very good; if you don't want to do so for any other reasons, there are other laws. Do take action against the offending people.

Regarding the person who was named and handed over to the State Government, up till now not a single step has been taken. One month has passed. Actually he was caught; his licence was taken. Because the machinery is with the State Government, he was handed over. No reply to me, and no action intimated to me.

This is just an example-not to hurt anyone's sentiments. I am giving just an example. Therefore, it can be done. It is not an impossible task. I am by nature an optimist. I have a good leadership, which I am getting from my Minister-in-charge Shri Shiv Shanker; and there is a specific direction from the Prime Minister that all public distribution has to be streamlined, and has to be streamlined with the speed and efficiency that is required. We are on that path.

While answering the question, it was my fault that the records of the losses were not with me. They came later on; and the hon. Member felt that there should be a half-an-hour discussion, and rightly so. At the right time, this discussion is taking place. The procurement has started. Storage will take place. Distribution will then come in. After the Session is over by 7th May possibly, let the hon. Members go to their constituencies. Let them please specify any offending officer or anything that is wrongly happening. Let them give particulars, their names, addresses and details to us. And I assure you that with the hottest despatch at

[Shri A. K. Panja]

our command, and with the strictest laws available to us, we shall take disciplinary action, of course according to law.

Sir, to take steps according to law, we have to act in accordance with the law. So, these have to be combined, because that is the law of the land in India.

With these words, I hope I have answered the points raised by the young hon. Member in this House.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Under Rule 55 (2) I draw your attention to the fact that the permitted Members are permitted to put one question each. So, let them frame their questions properly, and put them. Now Mr Somnath Rath. He is not present.

[Translation]

DR. G. S. RAJHANS (Jhanjharpur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, whenever, there is a reference of Food Corporation of India, we hang our head with shame. It is said that "Food Corporation hai Jahan, Bhrashtachar hai wahan" (whenever there is Food Corporation, there is corruption) The 14th March, 1986 will be written in golden letters in the history of the country.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please put questions to the hon. Minister.

DR. G. S. RAJHANS : I shall speak for one or two minutes. Then I shall put questions. Please bear with me.

[Translation]

When we put pressure to know something about the Food Corporation of India, we were given the sensational information about the loss to the tune of six hundred crores of rupees in the course of transit and storage during five years. This news was published in the newspapers of the 15th March and on the next day editorials on this issue appeared in the leading newspapers of this country. Raids were conducted on the houses of top officers of F. C. I. on the 19th. It seems that the hon. Minister does not know about it. The hon. Minister should tell whether raids were conducted or not. If yes then the names of the officers.

I would also like to know why the houses of the top officers of F. C. I. at Bombay were not raided.

The second thing I would like to point out is that some officers are continuing at a particular place for long time. I would like to know the rules under which some officers are staying at some special places, i.e., in regional offices for long. I want to say that these officers and bureaucrats terrorise people. They are bungling the public money and I say it with confidence and am ready to accept challenge. I am ready to accept this challenge because I have worked on the posts of Senior Executives and Deputy General Managers in the top companies of this country. I tell the honourable Minister and claim that I will prove these figures as incorrect. These officers of F.C.I. are misleading the country. I demand that a committee consisting of M.Ps. from both the houses should be constituted and that committee should look into the matters of F.C.I. and to find out whether corruption is prevalent there or not. Hon'ble Minister should reply to this issue.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA (Pali) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to say that the hon. Minister, is a very good minister and talk good things. He at least admits that there working is not upto the mark. The former minister Shri K.P. Singh Deo had told that after enquiry a report would be presented in January, 1986. Would you please now tell about the whereabouts of that report ? This was your promise.

[English]

He has assured the House that he will submit a Report. He has given a statement on the Floor of the House; and he said that this will be done.

The financial Express Bureau dated 10.1.86 reads as follows :

"The sharpest increase has been in the case of handling cost of rise, which has moved up by about 76 per cent—from Rs. 9.54 per quintal in 1981-82 to Rs. 17.57 per quintal in 1984-85 (as per revised estimates)"

It further reads as follows :

“The handling charges in the case of wheat moved up from Rs. 22.32 per quintal to 28.09 per quintal during the same period.

The distribution of foodgrains has also moved up steeply by about 28 per cent—from Rs. 37.87 per quintal in 1981-82 to Rs. 48.34 per quintal in 1984-85”.

Then it further reads as follows :

“The salary bill (including contribution of provident fund and overtime) has moved up by 63 per cent (from Rs. 92.58 crores in 1981-82 to Rs. 450.75 crores in 1984-85.”

The other administrative expenses of the Corporation have also jumped up by about 36 per cent, from Rs. 11.33 crores in 1981-82 to Rs. 15.31 crores.

Now, I want to quote from the reply given by Shri A.K. Panja to Unstarred Question No. 1920 on 7.3.1986 :

“On 31.1.1986, Weights and Measures Department of Delhi Administration weighed at random 10 bags out of 30 bags of wheat issued by Food Corporation of India at its Ghavera Depot to Delhi State Civil Supplies Corporation for distribution through fair price shops and found shortages of 24.5 kgs.

This is the reply given by the Minister. And he said that he would institute an enquiry.

[*Translation*]

I want to know if you have instituted an enquiry against them and if so, what are the results of the enquiry. Further, how would you decrease the expenses of the Food Corporation of India which has turned into a very big establishment. I would also like to know the amount you have paid as demurrage. The most important point is that the rate of interest, on the loan taken from the Government, is very low. It is three per cent to five per cent. This department of yours is of no use ; it cannot supply good-quality foodgrains and is incurring losses. I would also like to know the names

of the people whom you have punished and the action you are taking against the culprits.

[*English*]

SHRI A.K. PANJA: So far as the hon. Member's first question is concerned, he wanted to know the names, I have brought the list here. If permitted I can read out only names. (*Interruptions*). We must realise that there are more than a lakh of persons working there. Therefore, I will give the names and the sections under which the case is filed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please lay it on the Table so that other Members may also read it.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA: What about our question? We do not want list. I say. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: You give the answer on the broad lines.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA: What about the report as on January 1986? That is a statement of the Minister. What happened to that report?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That he will reply.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA: He has not given the answer. Why demurrage..... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI A.K. PANJA: I was answering the first Member. If Mr. Daga wants answers to his questions first, then I have to decide which one I should answer first. I am first answering the first Member who raised the points. I have got the list with me.

DR. G.S. RAJHANS: I want to know whether the raid was conducted on 19th of March.

SHRI A.K. PANJA: The actual date is not with me,

MR. CHAIRMAN: That can be supplied later.

SHRI A.K. PANJA: But certainly we have found out and I have got the total list

[Shri A.K. Panja]

with me and I will certainly lay it on the Table of the House.

SHRI A.K. PANJA: Mr. Daga raised not one question but several. So far as the ... (Interruptions).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is Mr. Rajhans's question over?

DR. G.S. RAJHANS: No, Sir, I wanted to know whether the hon. Minister is prepared to form a Joint Committee of both the Houses to look into the working of Food Corporation of India. This is more important than anything else.

SHRI A.K. PANJA: The first thing is that the Public Accounts Committee is there. So far as the hon. Members, team is concerned non-official group and others in the Board of Directors-four vacancies are there. So, one of the Members may come in as a non-official. But forming another committee will again delay the matter. The Public Accounts Committee examines in detail. The Members go round all over India wherever they choose at random. There is no question of any hide and seek. Therefore, if any committee is required, we shall certainly look into it. But it is not required. My feeling is when we have started doing it, then our entire action has to be stalled until the committee gives its Report. That mean definitely another two years. It will not be possible to complete the report in such a vast country, with so much infrastructure available. If the hon. Member knows any particular details, he should give them to me.

DR. C.S. RAJHANS: If you give me two hours, I can unmask many things. I know many things and that is why I request that ... (Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND TOURISM (SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT): I will suggest that the hon. Member can meet the Minister and give him all the details.

SHRI A.K. PANJA: That is what I am saying. He need not talk for two hours, he

can give me the details which can be... .. (Interruption).

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT: Mr. Minister, you are inviting him, you are calling him in your Chamber.

SHRI A.K. PANJA: Yes, certainly. Sir, so far as Mr. Daga's various questions are concerned, they have gone into several factors. About the losses I have already said. I need not reply again. The break up figures also I have given. Mr. Daga has pointed out why it has increased for two years. The quantum has also increased along with it. I am not saying that I am justifying the cause but I am saying that we are looking into the details. The point is that the quantum has also increased and along with the volume of movement, the transshipment and the transit also has increased. Every incidental increase has been there. Along with that, the payment to the farmers also has increased so that they come and we procure at a reasonable price. Then we are storing the entire thing. The Committee's Report also we have to comply with. Buffer stock has to be kept. The on-going stock has to be kept. To the end-user also we have to give at a reasonable price. Therefore, there the subsidy is involved, I have already stated all those figures. Considering all these, Mr. Daga being a senior Member here, would realise that it increase with the volume. But we are certainly looking into what are the controllable expenditure which could be controlled, what are the losses which could immediately be stopped. And that is why I have stated ten points—the performance and duties of the States and the performance and the duties of FCI officials. With these words, I think, the hon. Members except those who wanted to point out..... (Interruptions).

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA: The report should be given as on 1st January.

SHRI A.K. PANJA: Yes, certainly. A note be given by Mr. Daga and a note be given by the hon. Member... (Interruptions).

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA: Mr. K.P. Singh Deo had said that a report regarding the Food Corporation of India by January, 1986.....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT: May I suggest to the hon. Member, Mr. Daga that if he wants some more satisfaction or information, he can also meet the Minister.

SHRI A.K. PANJA: Yes, certainly. So far as Mr. Singh Deo's report is concerned,

I have no knowledge myself. I will certainly look into it and inform them. These are my submissions,

18.56 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, April 21, 1986/ Vaisakha 1, 1908 (Saka).
