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12 HRS.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW DEPUTY MINISTERS

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS (DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH) : I beg to introduce the three new Deputy Ministers to you and to the House—Shri Sidheshwar Prasad, Shri Jagannath Pahadia and Chaudhuri Ram Sewak. (*Interruptions*).

श्री मधु लिमये (मुंगेर) : और भी बहुत से नाम सुनने में आ रहे थे। क्या उन को ऐसे ही लटकाए रखा था।

MR. SPEAKER : I do not think you are making a Ministry before the House now! Let us go to the next item.

SHRI NATH PAI *rose*—

MR. SPEAKER : About what?

SHRI NATH PAI (Rajapur) : We are seized of the matter that the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs has been pleased to introduce three of his new junior colleagues. Normally we would have applauded because they are young, though for no other reason, but knowing that this is a precautionary step, that this is not needed by the requirements of the country, it is only to prevent would-be defections that these appointments have been made, may I ask if the Government is going to be a large-scale employment exchange? We must get a reply. Is the Government going to be the biggest employment exchange in the country?

श्री मधु लिमये : नये नये वज्जोर तो लिये जा रहे हैं, लेकिन कबीना का एक वज्जोर अरसे से पड़ा हुआ है और प्रधान मन्त्री उन को कोई महकमा नहीं दे रही हैं। इस सदन, सरकार और देश के लिए यह अच्छा नहीं लगता है कि नये नये मन्त्री लिए जा रहे हैं और कबीना के एक सदस्य को काम नहीं मिल रहा है। हमारे दोस्त का कोई महकमा दे दिया जाये।

MR. SPEAKER : I do not think it is a matter for discussion.

12.03 HRS.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

FAILURE OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT TO SUPPLY FOODGRAINS TO DEFICIT STATES.

SHRI A. K. GOPALAN (Kasergod) : I call the attention of the Minister of Food and Agriculture, Community Development and Co-operation to the following matter of urgent public importance, and I request that he make a statement thereon :

"The failure of the Central Government to fulfil the promised commitments of foodgrains supply to deficit States resulting in threatened break-down of rationing in West Bengal and serious scarcity conditions in Kerala and other States."

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) : In making allocations for each month, during the last week of the preceding month, Government of India make an estimate of the quantities that are likely to be available both from imports and internal sources and make allocations to the deficit States accordingly. It often happens that the availability during the month differs from the estimate made during the last week of the preceding month. Sometimes ships do not arrive on the scheduled dates. At times there are difficulties in clearance of foodgrains at ports due to several causes like heavy rains and strikes. All this results in the supplies during the month not being upto the allocations made. There was dislocation in clearance and despatch at the ports due to rains during the months of August, September and October. As against an allotment of 858 thousand tonnes of foodgrains other than rice during July, actual supplies were 784 thousand tonnes. Similar figures for August, September and October are as follows :—

Month	In '000 tonnes	
	Allotment	Supplies
August	876	859
September	880	806
October	883	801

It will thus be seen that the gap between allocation and supplies has not been very wide during recent months.

As the House is aware the position of rice has all along been difficult and it has not been possible to fix before hand any monthly allocation as such to the different States as in the case of wheat and other grains. The actual supplies of rice in July amounted to 68 thousand tonnes. Supplies during August, September and October have been 77,000, 64,000 and 66,000 tonnes respectively. It will thus be seen that the supply of rice also has not been significantly lower during the last three months as compared to the supply during July.

2. It is however, a fact that the situation in West Bengal and Kerala has been difficult even from the middle of 1967. At the beginning of the current year on the basis of expected availability during 1967 and taking into account the minimal needs of all the deficit States it was estimated that West Bengal would be supplied during the year about 1 lakh tonnes of rice and sufficient wheat to meet their statutory rationing commitment leaving a small surplus for distribution on a small scale in the modified rationing areas. Towards the end of March, at a meeting of Prime Minister with the Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister and Food Minister of West Bengal, it was agreed that 15,000 tonnes of rice and 75,000 tonnes of wheat would be supplied to West Bengal per month upto June. Even after June attempts were made to continue the supply of 15,000 tonnes of rice and 75,000 tonnes of wheat to West Bengal per month. In August, the situation in West Bengal deteriorated further and it was agreed that in addition to whatever rice could be supplied from the Central pool, about 105 thousand tonnes of wheat and milo and other grains would be supplied to them per month upto the end of October. Actual supplies of these grains have been over one lakh tonnes each month in August, September and October, the total quantity supplied being 3,11,300 tonnes. Except for September, when the supply was only 9,000 tonnes, about 15,000 tonnes of rice were supplied in the other two months.

For November, attempts are being made to supply the State 15,000 tonnes of rice and 110 thousand tonnes of wheat and other foodgrains. Allotments of rice could not be made earlier as the availabilities from internal sources and imports were

not known before the beginning of the month. Efforts were made to rush rice from Punjab and Madhya Pradesh but unfortunately, these could not reach West Bengal at the beginning of the month. However, to make up for the shortfall in rice, an additional quantity of 7,000 tonnes of wheat was allotted and arrangements were made to have it delivered expeditiously to West Bengal Government. The rice moving from Punjab and Madhya Pradesh has started reaching Calcutta and it is expected that the issue of rice will recommence. Further allocations of rice have also been made from Madhya Pradesh and Orissa and sufficient rice to make up the quantities promised will also be made available from imports expected at Calcutta.

3. Kerala is informally rationed and the actual offtake used to be 70,000 to 75,000 tonnes of rice and about 20,000 tonnes of wheat per month. When rice supplies fell short the wheat ration was raised by 40 grams per adult per week. Additional wheat supplies were also made available to enable the card holders to draw the shortfall in rice in wheat in addition to their full wheat quota. As a result, the offtake of wheat in Kerala has gone up to 75,000 tonnes in August and 58,000 and 56,000 tonnes in September and October respectively.

The actual supplies of rice to Kerala from Central Government stocks during August to October have been 39,600, 33,300 and 34,500 tonnes respectively. The shortfall has been due to the fact that supplies had to be made mainly from imports as the internal availability was low, these being the lean months for rice.

In November, about 25,000 tonnes of rice will be provided from imports. In addition, 4,000 tonnes of rice from fresh procurement has been allotted from Madhya Pradesh to Kerala depots. Madras Government is also being requested to move substantial quantities of rice to Kerala. Since the crop in Andhra Pradesh is late, it is not likely that any sizable quantities will be available from that State till December. The rice position in Kerala is expected to improve in December when with the crop coming into the market supplies from Andhra Pradesh are expected to pick up.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE (Kanpur) : Copies of the statement should have been circulated earlier. We cannot remember all these figures.

SHRI A. K. GOPALAN : The statement only shows how much had been imported and how much had been sent. What we wanted was to know the position today in the deficit States, whether there is scarcity, starvation and non-fulfilment of the commitment that has been made. If the commitment has not been fulfilled, we want to know, not why, but whether it would be fulfilled by taking other steps.

Kerala is a 60 per cent deficit State. They have procured more than the target of 50,000 tonnes this time. The Food Minister went to Madras and requested for some grains. They also promised to give, but a circular was sent saying no two States can have some understanding to give foodgrains. So, it was stopped. Certain commitments we are made inside Parliament and also outside by the Prime Minister and Food Minister, but they have not been fulfilled. From April to the first week of October, only an average of 40,000 tonnes were given. If the Centre does not fulfil the commitments and does not allow a State which is 60 per cent deficit to get foodgrains from outside, it means the Government wants to starve the people. A report appeared in the *Statesman* two days back that there is ration only for 10 days in Kerala. Now the rice ration is only 3 ounces. It was said that we were not taking wheat. Now wheat is taken but this month we understand that no wheat or rice will be given. According to the statement, ships are moving. Because there is a port in Cochin, ships will be moving. It is said that ships have left such and such place, but some ships which started have never reached Cochin. We want to know whether the Central Government want to starve the people of Kerala, and topple the State Government there in this manner by not giving food or whether the Central Government will see that the commitment already made is fulfilled and the people are not starved there.

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM) : This question had raised on previous occasions also in the House. I

have only to repeat what I said then, viz., it has not been possible to supply to Kerala the full quantity of rice. Then we understood that any shortfall in rice will be made good with wheat.

SHRI A. K. GOPALAN : It has not been made good for the last two months.

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : As a matter of fact, the offtake of wheat was 75,000 tonnes in September and it has come down in October. I myself enquired the reason for the lower offtake in October. I was told that a certain new crop of paddy has come out in Kerala and therefore, naturally, the cultivators who have produced it do not draw wheat with the result that in their case the withdrawal of wheat has been reduced. I have been taking care to see that adequate quantity of wheat is maintained in Kerala so that whatever shortfalls is there in the supply of rice that is made good by wheat.

SHRI A. K. GOPALAN : It has been reported that there is no wheat in the godowns there.

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : On the 1st of this month 45,000 tonnes of wheat was in stock in the various godowns in Kerala. As I said, I will take action to see that whatever shortfall is there in the supply of rice is made good by wheat and an adequate quantity of wheat is maintained in Kerala so that those who want to draw wheat are able to do so.

AN HON. MEMBER : When ?

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : It is available.

SHRI A. K. GOPALAN : Does that mean that the three ounces of rice supplied now will also be made good by wheat ?

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : I said that whatever shortfall is there in the supply of rice will be made good by supply of wheat. We have imported 25,000 tonnes of rice. We have moved some rice Madhya Pradesh. We are taking it up with the Government of Madras to quicken the despatches from Madras to Kerala. All these steps we have taken, and whatever shortfall remains will be made good by supply of wheat.

SHRI A. K. GOPALAN : Will the Government allow the Government of Kerala to get rice from Madras or is it a fact that the Central Government said that it should not be done even when Madras promised to give rice to Kerala ?

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM : As a matter of fact, whatever Madras is supplying to the central pool is meant to be despatched to Kerala. There have been some bilateral deals between State Governments. That upsets the whole central pool. Each State Government does not know the requirements of other States. What I have suggested is—and the hon. Member is referring to that letter—that whenever there is such a deal or negotiations are carried on between two States the Centre should be brought in the picture so that we know what supply has been made to the States from the central pool. Otherwise there is no difficulty in Kerala getting supplies from Madras.

DR. RANEN SEN (Barasat) : When a few years back statutory rationing was introduced in West Bengal that covered more than 80 lakhs of people there. At that time there was a guarantee given by the Central Government that adequate food-stuffs will be supplied to West Bengal to keep the statutory rationing running. After the new government was set up there in March this year the Government of India; it is known, started behaving very tardily in the matter of supply of foodgrains to West Bengal. Recently, in the month of September, the Central Government came to an agreement with the West Bengal Government and agreed to supply 1,05,000 tonnes of foodgrains monthly in all till the end of this year. But on 12th November the Food Department of the Government of West Bengal informed the Central Government that even on 12th November there was a backlog of 11,000 tons of rice. Secondly, for the month of November the Central Government has allotted only 6,000 tons of rice out of which only 4,500 tons have been despatched and the Government of West Bengal has received 3,500 tons or so. As a result of this tardy behaviour, as a result of this definite machination to make the Government and the people of West Bengal suffer, even this backlog has not been supplied by the Central Government.

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As a direct result of this, last week not a grain of rice was available in the whole of Greater Calcutta where 80.5 lakh people are under rationing. If even the agreement that was arrived at in the month of September is not fulfilled and if the Government of India goes on violating it, then what is the reason for the Government of India in the Ministry of Food to come to some agreement with the State Government and then ultimately bluff the people and the State Government ?

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : I do not want to go into the insinuations and imputations of the hon. Member. As far as the factual position is concerned, we have been supplying to West Bengal each month about one lakh tons, sometimes a little more, of wheat and milo. So far as rice supply is concerned, in one month as against the allotment of 9.5 thousand tonnes we supplied 14.5 thousand tonnes. Then, in October, as against an allotment of 13,000 tons, we supplied 15,400 tons. There has been some shortfall in the month of September, but that was due to factors beyond our control. As is well-known, in the international market itself the availability of rice is very difficult. We are trying to purchase rice from various countries through both government and private agencies. Though some ships were expected at our ports, due to factors beyond our control the ships did not arrive in time because of which there was some shortfall in supply. As far as the current month is concerned, I can assure the hon. Member that 15,000 tons of rice is likely to be supplied to West Bengal from Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and other States.

DR. RANEN SEN : Today is the 14th of this month and only 3,500 tons have been received so far. How is the West Bengal Government to pass the next 16 days ? That has to be answered.

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Jyotirmoy Basu.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU (Diamond Harbour) : When six West Bengal Ministers resorted to *dharna* before the residence of the Prime Minister, she very promptly assured them in the presence of the hon. Food Minister, that the commitments made to West Bengal would be fully honoured. They have not done so. They had no intention to do so. In West Bengal the Central Government is using food as a

[Shri Jyotirmoy Basu]

political handle, I must say....(interruptions) I am only a postman, describing what is happening there. They are trying their political adventure there....(interruptions). Apart from these, in the first week of October the Central Government promised the people of West Bengal an extra quantity of 9,000 tons of rice as a bribe to topple the State Government, but the people of West Bengal did not accept it. Under the circumstances, may I know (a) what is the total shortfall in supply of rice this year, since the United front Government came to power in West Bengal; (b) in how many cases the consignments were not physically delivered within the promised period....

MR. SPEAKER: He is making a speech.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU: The Minister is cleverer than me and he will answer my question. A man made fire to cook food. Shri Jagjivan Ram said the rice will come in October. But the rice actually comes only in December. What is that poor man expected to do? Hang that promise of Shri Jagjivan Ram in his room to kill his appetite? So, I would like to know in how many cases the consignments were not physically delivered on the promised dates. Thirdly, has the Food Minister advised the over-energetic Governor of West Bengal not to meddle with the harvest and procurement of food in West Bengal?

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE: I would like to dispel any impression in the mind of the hon. Member that there has been any political consideration in this matter. May I submit for the information of the hon. Member that shortfalls in supply in some other States were much more steep?

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU: Please speak only about West Bengal; not other States.

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE: I was submitting that the shortfalls in supply in the case of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Mysore have been more compared to West Bengal and Kerala. But I am not trying to justify this. My point is that the rice supply position was very difficult during the last three months. As far as West Bengal is concerned, since January while we

allotted them 1,52,000 tons the supply has been 1,36,000 tons. There has been a shortfall of about 16,000 tonnes only over the last ten months. As far as wheat and milo supplies are concerned, we are trying to keep up according to schedule.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU: How many times the consignments were not actually, physically, delivered in West Bengal on due dates?

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE: I have given the figures monthwise. In the month of August, as against the allocation of 9.5, the supplies were 14.5, that is, there was oversupply as compared to the commitment. In October, as against the allotment of 13, the supplies were 15.4. There has been some difficulty in the earlier part of this month. As I have already explained, we are trying to make up the position.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: May I know whether it has been brought to the notice of the hon. Minister that at the time when the conspiracy was going on at the Centre to topple the duly elected Government of West Bengal, Mr. Jyoti Basu, the Deputy Chief Minister of West Bengal met the Governor Mr. Dharma Vira, and apprised him that the food situation there excited horror rather than pity and it was after the Governor rang up the Food Ministry here that some rice was sent to West Bengal? I would like to know why till then no rice was sent there and also whether it is a fact that in some of the districts of West Bengal there is absolutely no rice available and in Greater Calcutta, neither rice is available nor has it been substituted by wheat.

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE: I have already explained the position of supplies.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: Why till the Governor rang you up you did not do it yourself?

SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM: I am not aware of the Governor ringing me up regarding this.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: He rang up the Ministry. You are the Minister.

श्री श्रीचन्द गोयल (चण्डीगढ़) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, हिमाचल प्रदेश जिसको जनसंख्या 30 लाख से अधिक नहीं है और जो कि पूर्णतया पहाड़ी क्षेत्र है, जहाँ का पैदावार वहाँ को जरूरत को पूरा करने के लिये बिल्कुल नाकाफ़ी है, इस के अतिरिक्त यह सोमा प्रदेश है, जिसको सोमाएं दा स्थान पर चीनों-पांगों और लहौल-स्मित में तिब्बत के साथ मिलती हैं तथा उस क्षेत्र में इस बात का भय है कि पंचमांगों तत्व वहाँ पर यह भाषा इस्तेमाल कर के कि यहाँ पर दा-तान २० किलो में गेहूँ मिलता है, पेट भर खाने को नहीं मिलता है, वहाँ को जनता को विद्रोहो कर रहे हैं, इस लिये इस प्रदेश को जरूरत को पूरा करने के लिए, जहाँ कि एक केन्द्र शासित क्षेत्र है, मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि वहाँ को जरूरत को पूरा करने के लिए केन्द्रोय सरकार ने उचित ध्यान क्यों नहीं दिया और उन्होंने जो वायदा किया था कि वहाँ पर खुराक वक्त पर पहुँच जायगी, वह क्यों नहीं पहुँच पाई ?

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : The requirements of Himachal Pradesh are being looked into and, in fact, the position has improved considerably now as compared to the earlier months.

12.28 HRS.

RE. MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT AND CALLING ATTENTION NOTICES

(Query)

MR. SPEAKER : Papers to be laid. Shrimati Indra Gandhi.

SHRI NATH PAI (Rajapur) : We have given a notice of an adjournment motion . . .

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI (Bhubaneswar) : Regarding the worst drought and cyclone in Orissa, there is a notice of . . .

MR. SPEAKER : A number of motions are there. I have received many adjournment motions and call attention notices on so many subjects. There are other motions also before me. It is not as though all

have been admitted or all have been rejected. Some calling attention notices have been admitted; some are kept pending. If anybody asks me now about his motion out of so many that I have received, I will not be able to remember and say anything now. I do not think that we should raise here questions like "what has happened to my call-attention", "what has happened to my adjournment motion". I will not be able to answer at all even if they are raised. The members can come to my chamber and we can discuss. If I have to answer here about all the hundred call-attention and adjournment motions, I am sure I will not be able to do it. May I, therefore, request the hon. members sitting on this side as well as on that side not to raise any question as "what has happened to my call-attention or adjournment motion"? Then, I will only have to say, "I do not know what your call-attention is; please come to my Chamber and we shall discuss". Whether it is Mr. Panigrahi or any hon. Member on this side, I will request them not to ask me as to what happened to their call-attention or adjournment motions; I will not be able to answer here. If they want to discuss with me, I am prepared to discuss with them in the Chamber.

SHRI RANGA (Srikakulam) : Adjournment motions cannot be dealt with in the same manner as call-attention notices. The fact that adjournment motions have been given notice of has got to be brought to the notice of the House. From out of those, you may pick up one and if the House gives permission, it is well and good. If you do not give permission at all for some of the adjournment motions to be moved, you need not refer to them at all. But such of the adjournment motions which you cannot raise any preliminary objection have got to be placed before the House and it is for the House to decide.

MR. SPEAKER : There is no doubt about it.

SHRI RANGA : There can be no such question as discussion in the Chamber . . .

MR. SPEAKER : I agree with him. There is no difference of opinion. If there is no preliminary objection, I can certainly place them before the House.