

there are some other universities for which the States are pressing. Does the UGC conduct a survey of the entire country and feel for the areas which are neglected and backward, which are hilly and far beyond the touch of a university? Why should our universities be an ivory tower and the UGC a point at that ivory tower, so that it does not touch any thing and it does not have a dynamic outlook? I would like the UGC to take the initiative in the matter and try to determine things for itself. These things can be discussed with the State Governments and other people who are responsible for running the universities. At present, we are suffering from a sense of delay, a sense of deferred priorities, a sense of postponement. The Central Pay Commission has submitted its report and the Government has considered it. A large number of Central Government employees are going to get a bigger pay packet from 1st December. But our Government has not been able to take a decision on the recommendations of the Sen Committee. In answer to Starred Question 116 today—it was not taken up due to lack of time—the Minister has said that the report has been received and it is being considered. So, how long precisely is the consideration? Is it longer than that the Government took for considering the report of the Central Pay Commission? Are teachers so unimportant that they can be given this stock reply that the report of the experts committee appointed to consider their pay scales is still being considered. We want a quick decision to be taken on this report.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He may continue his speech the next day.

17.31 hrs.

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF RICE SUPPLIED TO KERALA

MR. CHAIRMAN: We will now take up the half an hour discussion.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI (Chirayinkil): Sir, may I make a submission? My name could not come in the ballot and I have been left out. Since some of the hon. Members who have given their name may be absent, you may kindly give me a chance to ask a question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We will see.

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPA (Tellicherry): Sir, I am raising this half an hour discussion due to two reasons. First of all, the answer given to Unstarred Question No. 88 contained information which was not fully correct and in fact some of the statements made were obviously wrong. This is the reason why I am raising this half an hour discussion.

During the last session of Parliament the question of the food situation in Kerala was brought in this House, again by way of a half an hour discussion, and then the Minister promised that the Government are doing their best to save Kerala from a food crisis. But if you go through the statement made by the Minister, it is clear that the total quantity of rice and wheat supplied to Kerala at no time did exceed 85,000 tonnes. In October it was 45,000 tonnes of rice and 39,000 tonnes of wheat making a total of 75,000 tonnes.

Normally after the harvest in Kerala the rice price comes down. It should be noted that this year the price in the open market has not come down appreciably even after the harvest. The price in the open market is still Rs. 3 to 3.50 per kilo while in the neighbouring State of Tamilnadu it is Re. 1 to 1.50. Why is it so? It is precisely because the Centre failed miserably to keep up its promise in regard to the supply of the food requirements of Kerala after the food zone was abolished. In this context, I would like to quote what the Chief Minister of Kerala had said in an official publication "Three

[Shri C. K. Chandrappan]

years in office", because it is often commented in a very vague way. The Chief Minister said:

"The difficult condition that we are going through in Kerala as regards food are due mainly to non-fulfilment of the commitments by the Central Government which was made at the time of introduction of rationing system in Kerala as far back as in 1965. They are committed to supply 75,000 tonnes of rice per month and an equal quantity of wheat so as to enable to distribute the ration of 160 grams of rice and 160 grams of wheat to each adult in that State."

The hon. Minister last time also tried to evade this fact. The commitment was for 75,000 tonnes of rice and 75,000 tonnes of wheat. But if you go through the supply to Kerala during the last one year, during every month it was 77,000 tonnes, 67,000 tonnes or 65,000 tonnes. The maximum was 85,000 tonnes. Last month it was 75,000 tonnes and this month it is only 73,000 tonnes.

7.35 hrs.

[SHRI N. K. P. SALVE in the Chair.]

The latest situation will be 73,000 tonnes of foodgrains to Kerala. Kerala will not get even 73,000 tonnes because there are certain book adjustments to be made. There are rice and wheat advances by the Food Corporation of India which will be adjusted. As against 53,000 tonnes of rice which is offered, nearly 27,000 tonnes will be adjusted against the F.C.I. advance. 20,000 tonnes of wheat is offered to Kerala during this month out of which again 14,000 tonnes will be adjusted. That means, in actual fact, this month, we will get 46,000 tonnes of foodgrains.

I know, our Food Minister was here and he pleaded with the hon. Minister and the hon. Minister finally had gracefully agreed to some small adjustment. But what I am trying to say is that the situation with regard

to food in Kerala will be a little worse than what was last month. In place of 75,000 tonnes which we got last month, this month we will get 73,000 tonnes. This is the situation.

Now, coming to another point, the second part of the answer Q. No. 88, was an interesting statement that was made. It is better I should read it:—

"Food supply position in Kerala is difficult. Keeping in view the overall availability of foodgrains in the central pool, the relative need of other deficit States, the maximum possible quantities of foodgrains are being supplied by the Centre for meeting the reasonable requirements."

I do not know what is the reasonable requirement. The reasonable requirement of Kerala is to get 12 ounces of ration per adult individual. Today, the situation is that the Kerala Government is not even in a position to give 6 ounces of ration. Today, what is being given is 3 ounces and, sometimes, a little more and, to make up 3 ounces, the Kerala Government is compelled to give paddy which was procured from that State itself. This is the shameful situation; this is the sad condition in which the rationing system has landed in Kerala.

Then, to add insult to injury, the statement comes—I quote:

"In addition, the Kerala Government was permitted to purchase some quantities of rice from surplus States on State-to-State basis."

When this statement was questioned, I got an explanation from the Ministry which says:

"Upto August, it was allowed."

But the Minister was answering the Question on 12th November in the House that Kerala was permitted, over and above what was given by the Centre, to take some rice from Madras or from some other States on State-to-State basis.

There should be a limit to misleading the House, misleading the country. But the starving people of Kerala cannot be misled because they are starving and that is the reality which they are facing.

On 7th November, that is, 5 days before the statement was made in the House, the Kerala Chief Minister made a statement which got a banner headline in *Indian Express* and other papers which says:

"The Central Government bans rice deals from State to State."

After banning the rice deals from State to State, you should understand, if the State deal had been allowed, Kerala could have given some electricity, some power, to Madras and could have got some rice from Madras to Kerala, to give our starving people. But the Centre, the Krishi Bhavan has said, 'Don't do it'. They said 'Nothing doing. You cannot do it'. When they say, 'You cannot do that', are they right to make a commitment here in this House? If the commitment has at all any value, you should stand by your commitment and you should completely fulfil your commitment. They never did fulfil and they never could do it.

Now, another thing which has happened is that we have surplus power in our State. That we can give to other States. There is no ban on it. So, whatever surplus we have we should share it with the rest of the country. We are not against it. We are very happy about it. But whatever deficit we have, we have to meet the deficit single-handed. How can these people, when they have such an attitude, such a policy, speak of national integration? I wonder.

Now, coming to another aspect, the Minister often says that rice is not available and 'Wherefrom we will get it? Nobody can give rice'. This is a fact. But here is a statement made by Mr. Juneja—he is the villain of the piece—the Secretary who is running the whole Ministry of Agriculture, sitting in the Krishi Bhavan....

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Now he is in Rome.

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPAN: When he was in India, he made a statement to the pressmen on the 28th September when the Soviet offer of foodgrains was made to India that an unspecified quantity of rice is also offered. What happened to that rice? Sir, there is a very strong wheat lobby here working under the patronage and blessings and guidance of this Mr. Juneja. They scuttled it. All these years these people were giving their advice to the people of Kerala, 'You have a very bad habit of eating rice. You change your food habit'. Now, we have changed our food habit. Then, what is the situation? Even wheat is not being given to us. When we change the food habit, no wheat. When we say, 'Give us rice', no rice. This is the wonderful condition in which our State is put.

Another aspect is that the issue price of rice is enhanced a little recently during this period. Mr. Chavan explained that that was the one way to fight deficit financing. But what happened to our State? When the issue price has gone up, the black market price has also gone up. Now, our people who are to depend upon black market, whether we like it or not, have to pay more in the black market. How will this be solved? This can be solved only if the Central Government behave in a fashion, more bold, more determined and more courageous in implementing the promises they have made, solemnly made to this country. That is the take-over of the wholesale trade in rice. The wheat take-over they have sabotaged and with regard to rice, in the name of that sabotage, they just put it in the cold storage. Now, they are helpless and when we speak of take-over of the wholesale trade, there is a ready answer. I hope the Minister will say—that is why I am a little careful—If Kerala wants, it can take over the rice

[Shri C. K. Chandrappan]

trade. We are not against it'. There is an answer which the Centre never wanted the world to know. Our State is a deficit State. Our State is 50 per cent deficit in the matter of foodgrains. We cannot take over the rice trade and we cannot abolish the private trade completely when the Centre is shamelessly helpless in helping Kerala. So, this is the situation under which we could not do that. But the Kerala State Government made it very clear that they are for the take-over of the wholesale trade provided the Centre will fulfil its commitments.

Our problem is that the Centre has never fulfilled its commitments and as many months have passed we find that the Centre is gradually going back from fulfilling whatever commitments they have made. That is why from October, from 75,000 tonnes it has been reduced to 73,000 tonnes. If the situation continues like this, if after the harvest the price of food does not come down but if it goes up, it will create a very explosive situation in that State. There is a limit for patience in everything. I have to ask only one question and that is this. Is the Centre going to fulfil its commitment? If so, what is the commitment that they are going to fulfil? Are they giving any new interpretation to the commitment, or will they stand by the commitment originally made?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Banerjee, absent. Mr. E. A. Krishnan, absent. Mr. Varkey George.

SHRI VARKEY GEORGE (Kottayam): May I know from the Minister whether he is aware of the fact that political parties in Kerala especially Kerala Congress repeatedly have demanded the reestablishment of the southern zone as the only practical solution to tide over the present deplorable food situation in Kerala and also whether it has

been brought to his notice or attention that there has been a public statement made by the Governor of Kerala Shri N. N. Wanchoo endorsing this view, and if that is true, what is the reaction of the Central Government for reestablishing the Southern Food Zone?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu, absent.

Now, Mr. Vayalar Ravi, you have given intimation under Rule 55. Nothing would have delighted me more than to call you to ask a question for answer by the Agriculture Minister. But if you read Rule 55(5) and the explanation I am afraid I will not be able to call you to ask a question.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Your discretion is there, Sir. I would like to ask after he has spoken.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am, bound by the rule which has been laid down.

श्री हुकूम खन्व कछवाय (मरैना) :

कोई भी मेम्बर हाजिर नहीं है तो आप हमें मौका दे दीजिए ।

सभापति महोदय : कछवाय जी ,

नियम 55(5) के तहत आप ने तो नोटिस भी नहीं दिया है । जिन्होंने नोटिस दिया है उन को भी मौका नहीं मिल रहा है । आप रूल देख लीजिए । जो इंटिमेशन देते हैं उन में अगर बैलट नहीं होता है तो जिन्होंने इंटिमेशन दिया है उन को मैं बुला सकता हूं । बैलट होने के बाद जिन के नाम बैलट में आए हैं उन के अलावा और किसी को हम नहीं बुला सकते ।

श्री हुसैन खान कठारण: हमारी प्रार्थना
यह थी कि जो मेम्बर राजिर नहीं हैं उन
के स्थान पर हम को पूछने दिया जाय ।

सभापति महोदय : आप खुस आफ
प्रोसोजर बदलना दोत्रिए, तब मैं अगली
दफा बड़ी खुशी से आप का नाम पुकारूंगा ।

Mr. Ravi may seek for some explanation if you like after he has spoken.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN
THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
(SHRI ANNASHAHEB P. SHINDE):
Mr. Chairman, my colleague Mr.
Chandrappan used very strong words.

I am sorry that the hon. Member
has used strong words.

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPAN:
Strong feelings.

SHRI ANNASHAHEB P. SHINDE:
I appreciate and admire the hon.
Member's tenacity; he is indefatigable
champion of the cause of Kerala.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hunger sto-
machs lead to strong words. Mr.
Shinde.

SHRI ANNASHAHEB P. SHINDE:
I am sorry, Sir. I am not prepared
to agree with you. I can only give
information to the House and the hon.
Members as to what efforts the Gov-
ernment of India have made to meet
the requirements of foodgrains to
Kerala. The hon. Member has also
raised the issue last year and he
thought that Kerala's case should not
go by default and so he did it. Per-
haps he took the opportunity during
this session also to put forward the
case of Kerala.

I know that he is a very know-
ledgeable Member and we have great

respects for him. Even his colleague
Mr. Ravi is a knowledgeable person.
And before this debate, both of them
were briefing each other as to how
to put forward Kerala's case. I want
the hon. Member to appreciate in
what set of circumstances we had
been operating during the last one
year to help the States, particularly,
the deficit ones. May I say before we
go into the various issues raised by
the hon. Members that the sympathy
from the Central Government—Gov-
ernment of India is always with
Kerala. And they will be second to
none in supporting the cause of
Kerala in the matter of meeting the
foodgrains requirements of the States.
As far as Kerala and West Bengal
are concerned, these are the two
heavily deficit States. Unless the
Central Government helps them, it
is very difficult to manage the food
economy by these State Govern-
ments. I would like to dissipate the
impression on the minds of the hon.
Members. As I said, last year was
a year of severest drought this coun-
try has ever experienced. And des-
pite that, if I make a statement, I
hope the hon. Members will appre-
ciate that. I have got here the figures
of what the supplies were that were
made by the Centre to Kerala from
1969 onwards, during the last five
years. The largest quantity had been
supplied during the year 1973. By
the end of December, the total quan-
tity of foodgrains that would be sup-
plied from the Central Pool would
be 9.5 lakhs tonnes. I am not sug-
gesting for a moment that it had met
all the requirements of Kerala fully.
Perhaps there may be some hard-
ships caused to them. Despite our
difficulties and despite our depleting
stocks from the central reserves,
there has been no lack of sympathy
or efforts made by Government of
India to meet the requirements of
Kerala.

If we review the last one year, you
will find that normally we used to

[Shri Annasaheb P. Shinde]

supply rice to Kerala by procuring the same from Andhra. Andhra agitation came in. Andhra agitation did not affect only Andhra but it had affected the procurement of rice from there and to move the same not only from Andhra but from North to South. We were at our wit's ends as to how to meet the supplies to Kerala. The normal movement pattern, as I said a little earlier, was to procure rice from Andhra and move it to Kerala. We have to procure rice from Punjab and move it from all the way from there to Kerala. Because of Andhra agitation, the rail movement was dislocated. As soon as the Andhra Agitation calmed down, then the locomotive's strike came. There were innumerable difficulties. At one stage we were really afraid of this dislocation. For Kerala, Government of India did not spare any efforts. We decided very unusually to move the foodgrains by sea meaning thereby at a very heavy cost. For the sake of Kerala we felt that we should not mind the heaviest cost. We resorted to the sea movement in order that Kerala supplies were maintained and its food economy was not put to any difficulty.

As I was mentioning, the level of supplies, despite shortage and difficulties, has not been affected so far as Kerala is concerned, during the last few months, in any substantial manner. But because last year's drought affected Madhya Pradesh and there were a number of other areas where rice procurement was affected and the rice procurement was less, our rice crop had also been depleted, therefore, what we did was this; we did not reduce very substantially the supplies to Kerala, but we thought that rice might to some extent be replaced by wheat. During the last few months, therefore, the supplies to Kerala have been somewhere between 70,000 tonnes and 85,000 or 90,000 tonnes of rice and wheat together, substantial quantities of rice being replaced by wheat. The total

quantum which we have been supplying to Kerala has been as follows. In January, it was 80.2 thousand tonnes, in February, it was 65.7 thousand tonnes, in March, it was 69.2 thousand tonnes, in April 69.4 thousand tonnes, in May 85.3 thousand tonnes, in June 86.1 thousand tonnes, in July 87 thousand tonnes, in August 99.9 thousand tonnes, in September 75.1 thousand tonnes and in October 86.1 thousand tonnes. For this month, as the hon. Member himself has said, it would be about 70,000 to 75,000 tonnes. The actual allotment is 73,000 tonnes.

These figures will indicate that there have been continuous efforts to maintain a particular level of supplies to Kerala during the last few years. This year, we have not been able to increase the supply to a larger quantity. From this, therefore, no hasty inference should be drawn. I would like the hon. Member to sympathise with the Government of India and appreciate their difficulties. After all, they are Members of Parliament and as such representatives of the country. Of course, they may look to the interests of Kerala also, because primarily they represent that area, but they should also take into consideration the national situation. Therefore, I would like to appeal to the good sense of the hon. Members. There have been difficulties because of drought etc. and the procurement was less, but despite that, the position of Kerala has not been very badly affected.

There is one more point that I would like to submit for the consideration of the hon. Member. Since the kharif crop has started coming, we have drastically cut the supplies to a number of States, even to the extent of 40 to 50 per cent. I would not like to take the time of the House by quoting those percentages. But I would like to dispel the impression that the Centre is neglecting Kerala. In fact, what we have been doing is that despite our difficulties, we are seeing that the supplies to Kerala

are maintained at the highest level possible. We may cut down here and there, but not to any substantial extent in the case of Kerala. In the case of Gujarat, in July we allotted 90,000 tonnes, but this month we have allotted them only 36,000 tonnes. In the case of Rajasthan, in July we allotted 75,000 tonnes but during this month we have allotted only 35,000 tonnes. In the case of Maharashtra, in July, we allotted 2.50 lakhs tonnes, but this month we shall be giving them only 1.40 lakh tonnes. In the case of West Bengal also, where the food situation is very difficult, we allotted in July 1.55 lakh tonnes, but now we shall be giving them roughly 1.30 lakh tonnes only. So, as compared to other States, the level of supplies to Kerala has been much higher, despite our difficulty. Therefore, I would seek the co-operation of the hon. Members that when they go back to their constituencies, in Kerala, they should authoritatively tell the people how the Government of India have helped Kerala to the maximum extent possible.

Fortunately, the food situation is progressively expected to improve now, because procurement of rice has started in a very big way, and by yesterday evening we must have crossed the figure of 7 lakh tonnes of rice and coarse grains.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: The hon. Minister has said that 73,000 tonnes have been allotted, but virtually it is only 53,000 tonnes because there is a cut of 20,000 tonnes.

SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE: The cut will not be so much.

In regard to the cut, lest there should be any wrong impression, I might state that the Kerala Government had in addition to our allotment overdrawn from the depots during the last few months. I have not mentioned those quantities here. The Kerala Minister was good enough to come over here

and discuss with us. He says that procurement has started in a good way thereof. Fortunately, this year crop in Kerala is also good, and therefore, local procurement has started. What was suggested was what was drawn earlier might please be adjusted in November and December in two months and not earlier. We wanted to adjust it in October itself, but then we acceded to the request of the Kerala Government. The Kerala Chief Minister also wanted us to postpone this adjustment from October to November/December.

18.00 hrs.

SHRI M. K. KRISHNAN (Ponnani): Can he mention the advance taken by the Kerala Government from FCI?

SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE: I need not go into details. The State Government is aware of that. There is no dispute about the quantity overdrawn.

The point I was making was that the adjustment which has been worked out has been worked out fully in consultation with the Kerala Government. No unilateral decision has been taken. Nor has the Centre done anything arbitrary in these matters. Everything has been done after consulting the Kerala Food Minister and the Kerala Government in regard to this.

One point mentioned was why when the Soviet Union was prepared to supply rice, we did not avail of that offer since it would perhaps ease the supply position and more supply to Kerala would have been possible. When this team went to Moscow for discussing this, the Soviet Government explained that the quantities which they might be in a position to give us would be very small and moreover, that would be broken rice, not whole rice. We thought this would present some problems. As the Soviet Government has made such a generous offer to us and has created a tremendous

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amount of goodwill, we thought that bringing in broken rice would not be in the interest of the Soviet Union nor ourselves as the quantities were not very large.

SHRI VARKEY GEORGE (Kottayam): We do not mind broken rice.

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE: Somehow, since the quantities were very small—they were not in a position to offer large quantities—the delegation came to the conclusion that they might politely tell the Russian Government 'You may give us only wheat to the tune of 2 million tonnes'. On that basis, only the wheat deal was finalised.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What about the point he made about barter?

SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE: You are so keenly attentive. You have been impressed by the way in which the members championed the cause of Kerala. At the instance of the Kerala Government, when they thought they would be in a position to get some rice from some States, as the situation was difficult, we accepted some bilateral agreement between State and State. But now the procurement season has started. Suppose everybody, the Governments of Maharashtra, Kerala, West Bengal and so on were to go out to the States and purchase. How will the Central Government be in a position to procure? Our procurement will be affected. Our experience is that when these State Government representatives enter the market in this way, they outbid one another and offer higher prices. Then the local market prices are affected and local procurement is affected. After all, for whom do we procure? Whether we procure in Kerala, Punjab or Tamil Nadu, it is for deficit States like Kerala.

Therefore, hon. Members should appreciate that the Government have

recently taken a decision not to permit these bilateral transactions between State and State as that would affect central procurement which would directly affect allotment to deficit States like Kerala. This was done in the interest of deficit States themselves and hence there is nothing on which the hon. member should have any grievance or complaint.

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPA: On a point of clarification. The quota which is allotted to Kerala even now is not sufficient to meet the requirement and people are depending actually on the black market paying Rs. 3.50 or more. If the State could be in a position to get rice even at a little higher price from a nearby State people will be very happy because it will be less than the black market price.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has explained that.

SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE: Our procurement prices are fixed prices, because we wanted to deliver quantities at a pre-determined reasonable level of prices in the interest of consumers in deficit States. If this is done that procurement will be affected. In Tamil Nadu, for instance, this year procurement has been going on very well. As regards the *kurvai* crop, we have crossed one lakh tonnes. All those supplies would be available to Kerala. This has to be appreciated.

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPA: Has he seen the statement of the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister about it? He says they are really in a position to give rice to Kerala, 10,000 tonnes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is not what he is disputing. He is on a question of principle, why they are not allowing bilateral agreements on a barter basis.

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE:
Sir, in fact, he is speaking of 20,000 or 10,000. We shall be giving to Kerala in lakhs (*Interruptions*). What is in the interests of Kerala is, I think, the procurement should be very substantial, and substantial quantities should come to the Central pool and any decision which is likely to help that pool could help West Bengal and Kerala and other deficit States. So, there is nothing to be misunderstood in anyway. Only yesterday, some of the MLAs from Maharashtra sent me a letter making angry protests as to why while certain State Governments are prepared to send some foodgrains to Maharashtra, the Government of India is so unfair to Maharashtra. I do not know why this impression goes like this. While we are procuring in the interests of Maharashtra, Kerala and West Bengal, this impression should not be allowed to spread. I would seek the good offices of the hon. Members to convey the feelings of the Government of India to the Kerala people and our Kerala friends.

SHRI HUKAM CHAND KACHWAI
rose—

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE:
One last sentence, since I have to make one reply to Mr. George's question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr Kachwai wants to have a clarification

श्री हुकम चन्द कच्छवाई आपने कहा है कि सोवियत रूस ने चीन लाख टन अनाज दिया है लेकिन क्या यह बान मही है कि रूस ने अमरीका से खरीदकर अधिक मुनाफे पर हम को वह दिया है ?

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE:
It is a very unfair charge on the part of Shri Kachwai. He always looks

with a coloured glass at anything coming from the Soviet Union or from any other country which is really friendly to us. The Soviet Union has offered wheat, and not a single grain is from America, because I think there is some understanding between the USA and the USSR. I do not know the details, but whatever wheat has been offered to us, no grain is from the American supplies. 50 per cent by and large is from the Soviet Union's own production, and 50 per cent would be coming from Canada and Australia. There is no question of profiteering at our cost. The Soviet deal has been so generous, and we have to exchange quantity for quantity. For anything else, whatever freight expenditure would be there, that also would be mutually shared. I think there has not been such a generous deal as far as our country is concerned so far. All of us should appreciate and really give a compliment to the Soviet Government for coming forward to help us in a very difficult time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The whole nation is grateful for them.

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE:
Now, Mr. George had asked a question as to why we should not have a southern zone. The point is, there is no agreement on this among the southern States themselves, and therefore, for the Government of India to arrive at a decision with out the agreement of the southern States would be very difficult. (*Interruptions*).

MR CHAIRMAN: Order, order.

SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE:
As far as the future is concerned, let me say this. Some friends are inclined to criticise me, by saying that sometimes I am trying to depict a rosy picture. Fortunately, I must say in fairness to the country that this year's crop is really good, and we expect a sizeable procurement, and, as I said,

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the procurement trend is so satisfactory and therefore, if this trend continues, we shall be in a position to help Kerala in the months to come in a much better way. So, hon. Members will appreciate that the Government of India has tried its level best to help the Government of Kerala.

SHRI VASANT SATHE (Akola): I hope there will be adequate buffer-stocks this year. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE: What Mr. Sathe said is a very relevant thing. When we procure, we have to see that nothing is wasted, and we should very judiciously proceed, (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. We have had a very comprehensive reply from the Minister.

SHRI RAMACHANDRAN KADAN-NAPPALLI (Kasargod): May I know whether you will increase the wheat quota to Kerala?

SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE:

If we are in a position to give more rice to Kerala, because Kerala needs a little more rice and not wheat, we shall be glad. We are constantly in touch with the Kerala Government, and our effort would be to increase the quantum of rice; the Kerala Government and the Kerala people will be happy with that instead of asking for wheat.

श्री हुकम चन्द कछवाय: मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ केरल की जनता को प्रति यूनिट कितना गन्ना आप देते हैं ? क्या यह सही है कि तीन घाउन्स दिया जाता है ? साथ ही वहाँ की सरकार ने कितना मांगा है और कितना आपने दिया है ?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think the minister's reply has been very comprehensive. He has dealt with all the points. Whether it is satisfactory or not is entirely a matter of opinion.

18.11 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, November 20, 1973/Kartika 29, 1895 (Saka).