

Madras has been made to the hon. Minister. If it is not made he has every right to say, no, but he cannot ask an hon. Member to refer to the newspaper.

SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM: But after the reply has been given that we have not received any proposal to this effect, the hon. Member is pursuing whether we had seen the statement. The statement might have appeared in the Press and the hon. Member might have seen it but we have said that no official representation or proposal had been received.

CHIEF MINISTERS' CONFERENCE ON FOOD

*273. SHRI P. K. KUMARAN;†

SHRI T. V. ANANDAN:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the recent Chief Ministers' Conference held in Delhi had discussed the various aspects of the food situation; and

(b) if so, what are the decisions taken at the conference?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI D. ERING): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The conclusions of the conference of Chief Ministers were reported to Rajya Sabha in a Statement made in the Sabha by Minister of Food and Agriculture on 11th April, 1967.

SHRI P. K. KUMARAN: Since this meeting took place the food situation in the country has deteriorated, and today's paper carries the news from Kerala that the representatives of the parties have sent a telegram to the Central Government to rush supplies to Kerala and that the rationing system in Kerala has almost broken down. May I know in this connection whether the Government will autho-

rise the Food Corporation to take wholesale monopoly of food trade in surplus areas? They must be authorised to purchase the entire stock and keep the stock which is locally required with them in that surplus area and dispose of the surplus stocks to other areas instead of collecting 50 per cent or 70 per cent.

SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM: I will take up the matter with the Kerala Government to intensify procurement in Kerala.

SHRI T. V. ANANDAN: Apart from the discussions carried on in that Conference as reported to this House by the hon. Minister, may I know whether a discussion was also enunciated on the question of production, procurement and distribution being taken over by the Government in order to avoid this trouble of food problem in the country?

SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE: The role of the Food Corporation was discussed and it was envisaged and suggested in the conference that the Food Corporation as a public distributing agency should play a more and more important role in the procurement and distribution of food.

SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH: May I know whether any Chief Minister of a State stated that Indians settled in foreign countries be allowed to send agricultural implements and tractors to their relatives in India duty-free in order to step up agricultural production . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: How does that question arise out of this?

SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM: I do not think these things arise, out of Chief Ministers' Conference. The conclusions were included in a statement made in this House. Any supplementary can arise out of that and not the whole gamut of food and agriculture.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri P. K. Kumaran

SHRI D. L. SEN GUPTA: May I know whether in this Conference any representation was made from West Bengal about the famine conditions in the districts of Purulia, Bankura, Malda and West Dinajpur and whether any decision was taken in respect of giving special aid to remove the difficulties there? Since a series of starvation deaths are being reported in the daily papers, I wish the hon. Minister made a specific statement on this.

SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM: These questions were not raised at the Chief Ministers' Conference.

SHRI P. K. KUMARAN: I want to know it. The hon. Minister said that it was decided that the Food Corporation should participate more and more in the food business. May I know what part they are now playing? We have some Rs. 100 crores to be made available as the capital of the Food Corporation. What is the equity capital which the Food Corporation is now having? What is the total amount of business which they are doing?

SHRI ANNASAHAB SHINDE: If the hon. Member gives notice we can give it.

SHRI BALACHANDRA MENON: Will the hon. Minister be pleased to call another conference of the Food Ministers and see whether a uniform policy regarding procurement could be followed in both the surplus and deficit States, so that we can have a uniform policy regarding procurement, price and distribution?

SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM: We have procurement going on in the surplus and deficit States. So far as prices are concerned, I do not think there can be a uniform price in all the States for all the commodities in respect of procurement. That matter has already been considered. Certainly different prices for procurement will be fixed in different States.

SHRI M. V. BHADRAM: May I know, Sir, whether the proposal of

the Food Corporation procuring straight from the grower in the surplus States, especially Andhra, has been considered by this Conference and, if so, what was the result?

SHRI ANNASAHAB SHINDE: The mode of procurement in different States came up for discussion.

SHRI M. V. BHADRAM: I am referring to Andhra Pradesh.

SHRI ANNASAHAB SHINDE: The consensus in the Conference was that the particular mode of procurement that has to be followed in a particular State, including Andhra, should be left to the particular State Government.

DR. ANUP SINGH: Is the hon. Minister aware that between the two adjoining States of Haryana and Punjab there is a discrepancy of Rs. 40 per quintal in the price of Mexican wheat? It is being sold at Rs. 110 in Haryana and at Rs. 72 in Punjab. That was the price yesterday in the market. Is the Minister aware of it and is anything being done to bridge the gulf? In the two adjoining States the difference is Rs. 40 per quintal.

SHRI ANNASAHAB SHINDE: About this particular difference, we have no information, but we will try to find it out. As far as the procurement prices in Punjab and Haryana are concerned, they have been fixed at Rs. 70. They are on a par and they are at the same level.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Is it not a fact that one of the reasons why the Food Corporation of India is not in a position to procure to the extent desirable is that it does not have adequate finance and it has only got Rs. 28 crores or so, with which money it has to carry on the business? In view of these difficulties in regard to financial matters, may I know whether the Food Corporation and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture have made proper representations to the

Minister of Finance in order to make funds available for the operations of the Food Corporation of India?

SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE: As far as the financial requirements of the Food Corporation are concerned, we are always assessing the position from time to time and if there is any difficulty in regard to the availability of finance to the Food Corporation, we shall definitely take it up with the Finance Ministry.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: He says he is assessing. I have made an assessment. I say that on the basis of your plan for creating a buffer-stock of six million tonnes—two million tonnes of wheat and four million tonnes of rice—you would be normally requiring at the current rates at least Rs. 450 crores and against that you have got only a very small amount, which inhibits procurement. Of course, there is the turnover. You buy and sell, but may I know why, in that case, representation has not been made to the Minister of Finance in order to get the requisite funds?

SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM: So far as the functioning of the Food Corporation is concerned, the House is aware that in a particular State the Food Corporation can function under the power and authority delegated to it by the State Government concerned. So far as the funds necessary for making purchases are concerned, I can assure the House that the work of the Corporation will not suffer for want of funds.

श्री राजनारायण : क्या सरकार को यह पता है कि जब मुख्य मंत्रियों का सम्मेलन हुआ था तो उत्तर प्रदेश ने 2 लाख टन महीना बिहार ने 4 लाख टन महीना और बंगाल ने 1 लाख 75 हजार टन चावल तथा 14½ लाख टन गेहूं सालाना मांगा था ? क्या सरकार ने स्टेटवाइज उनकी मांग का अधिकतम भाग पूरा करने की कृपा की ? और क्या

यह भी सत्य है कि सरकार ने एक गश्ती पत्र द्वारा यह भी कह दिया है कि चूकि अमरीका के राष्ट्रपति ने जून के बाद दिये जाने वाले गल्ले के कागजपत्रों पर दस्तखत नहीं किये हैं, इसलिए जून के बाद वह कुछ नहीं दे पायेंगी और राज्य सरकारों को अपना इन्तजाम स्वयं करना चाहिये ?

श्री जगजीवन राम : इन प्रश्नों पर मुख्य मंत्री सम्मेलन पर विचार नहीं किया गया ।

श्री राजनारायण : क्या यह सही है यहां पर जो फूड ड्रिफ्ट हुई थी, तो सरकार की ओर से स्पष्ट बतलाया गया था कि हां, इस पर विचार हुआ था और आज मंत्री जी कहते हैं कि इस पर विचार नहीं हुआ था ? मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि बिहार, उत्तर प्रदेश और बंगाल ने ऊपर बतलाई गई मात्रा पर अनाज मांगा था या नहीं ? मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूं कि जब मुख्य मंत्रियों के सम्मेलन में इस सिद्धान्त को मान लिया गया था तो उसके विपरीत आज यहां पर उत्तर देने की मंत्री जी कृपा क्यों कर रहे हैं ?

श्री जगजीवन राम : मैंने यह कहा था कि यह प्रश्न मुख्य मंत्रियों के सम्मेलन से संबंधित है और इन विषयों पर मुख्य मंत्रियों के सम्मेलन में विचार नहीं किया गया । मैंने इतना ही कहा था कि किन-किन विषयों पर विचार किया गया ।

SHRI RAJNARAIN: The Minister should give a definite answer.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister has answered.

SHRI RAJNARAIN: What answer? Is it the duty of the Chair to say that the Minister has answered?

स्टेटमेंट जो रखा गया है उसमें लिखा है कि किन किन विषयों पर विचार किया गया और निर्णय लिया गया यह चीज वक्तव्य में शामिल है ।

SHRI D. THENGARI: There has been much deterioration in the food situation subsequent to this Conference of Chief Ministers, so much so that even our President, our Rashtrapati, has thought it proper to visit some of the drought-affected areas. I should like to know whether, consequent to the visit of our Rashtrapati to the drought-affected areas, the hon. Minister has come to conclude that greater supplies should be rushed to the areas visited by our Rashtrapati?

SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM: We are rushing supplies to the maximum of our capacity. I shall appeal to the hon. Members that in view of the limited resources at the Centre, the leaders of the various political parties will take up the work of dehoarding and procurement in right earnest so that the country can face the situation.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Is the Government aware that co-operation with the Food Corporation of India has been withheld by certain States? Secondly, is Government aware that today there is a press report that some S.S.P. Ministers from Kerala have stated that when the rice is available in the open market, it is up to the State Government to procure it and not run to the Central Government? Is this a fact?

SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM: The fact is that procurement in Kerala has not been up to the expectation of the Kerala Government, and I hope that they will take necessary steps in the matter to procure the requisite quantity.

DR. ANUP SINGH: With reference to my previous question I think that the answer of the hon. Minister was most disappointing. In the first place he said that he is not aware of the prices which are being quoted in Haryana which is only 20 miles from Delhi. I think that is a very serious reflection on the competence of the Ministry. The prices are being quoted

every day in the press. Secondly, he stated that both the States have been asked to fix the price at between Rs. 70 and Rs. 75. I have brought it to the hon. Minister's attention that that is not being done. There is discrepancy of Rs. 40. My question is what, if anything, is being done in the matter.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Sir, I have raised two different problems: whether the State Governments have withheld co-operation, and whether the Government is aware that rice is available in Kerala in the free market. These questions have not been replied also.

(No answer)

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: In view of the shortage of foodgrains we have to import foodgrains from other countries to feed the starving people of the country. The Kerala Government was given an assurance by private parties in Japan and America that they are in a position to supply adequate quantities of foodgrains. In view of this assurance, may I know whether the Chief Minister of Kerala raised this question and requested the Central Government that foodgrains should be imported from these two countries, Japan and America, and if so, what is the decision of the Government in this respect?

SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM: I shall be repeating the whole thing that I said in this House. In the first place this question does not arise out of the question that has been put down here. Even today issues are being raised and I shall be repeating all that I said in this House when the question was raised here that we are making effort to procure it from Andhra and send it to Kerala.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE: I referred to imports from Japan and America.

SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM: That question was also replied to here. I think if the hon. Member will look

into the proceedings of the House, he will find an answer to his question

*274 [The questioner (Shri Arjun Arora) was absent. For answer, vide col 2117-18 infra]

FERTILIZERS FOR ANDHRA PRADESH

*275 SHRIMATI C AMMANNA RAJA Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state

(a) the annual requirement of fertilizers of Andhra Pradesh, and

(b) what quantity of fertilizers is manufactured by the State and what quantity is imported?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI D ERING) (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha.

STATEMENT

(a) The fertiliser requirements of Andhra Pradesh for 1967-68 have been assessed as follows on the basis of consumption in earlier years, production programmes for the current year and total availability of fertilisers during the year —

	Tonnes	
(i) Nitrogenous fertilisers	1,82,880	of Nitrogen
(ii) Phosphatic fertilisers	89,040	of P205
(iii) Potassic fertilisers	20,000	of K20

(b) There are now four fertiliser factories in Andhra Pradesh producing superphosphate. Another factory now under construction will produce nitrogenous and complex fertilisers. Their total production in 1967-68 is estimated at 40,000 tonnes of Nitrogen and 50,000 tonnes of P205. The balance requirements of the State are expected to be met by supplies from the Central Fertiliser Pool. The details are given below:—

Source	Nitrogen	P205	K20
1. Supplies by the Central Fertiliser Pool (from imports and from indigenous fertiliser factories outside the State)	139880	36380	..
2. Direct sales by fertiliser factories in the State	40000*	50000*	..
3. Direct sales by fertiliser factories outside the State	3000	2660	..
4. Sales from imports by STC through the Indian Potash Supply Agency Ltd	20000
	182880	89040	20000

*The production is likely to be lower if the commissioning of the Coromandel Fertiliser factory at Visakhapatnam is delayed

SHRIMATI C AMMANA RAJA: In view of the fact that Andhra's requirement of fertiliser is very great, why is it made dependent on import from other countries and supplies from other States? It may not come in time; it may not come at all, and most of the other States are depending upon Andhra for the rice supply.

SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE: The fertiliser requirement of Andhra has been looked into, and I remember that on 1-4-67 it is reported that 41,000 tonnes of nitrogenous fertilisers were available. That is 48 per cent of the State's requirements for the kharif season. As far as the rest of the quantities is concerned, we are