

SHRI A. D. MANI: May I ask the Minister to answer the question raised by Mr. Kumaran specifically, viz., the foodgrains sold by the Food Corporation are higher in price than what is available in normal private trade and, if so, what is the quantum of difference?

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has explained it.

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: I have explained it and I find that in the open market after all it is the price at which we sell in the fair price shops and in the ration shops. I can tell the hon. Member that in 99 per cent cases the open market prices are much higher than the controlled price which is charged either in the fair price shops or in the ration shops.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN FOOD

*6. **SHRI R. P. KHAITAN:** Will the Minister of FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government give more attention to cash crops than food crops in spite of acute food deficit in the country;

(b) if so, whether Government now propose to give more attention to food crops during the Fourth Plan period for attaining self-sufficiency in food; and

(c) if so, what are Government's programmes in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI S. D. MISRA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The highest priority is being given to measures for achieving rapid increase in production of foodgrains.

(c) The main programmes relate to extension of irrigation, greater use of

fertilisers, insecticides, improved seeds, better implements and machinery, provision of crops loans and supporting price policies.

Besides, a programme for cultivation of high yielding varieties of paddy, wheat, hybrid jowar, hybrid bajra and hybrid maize has been taken up with a Fourth Plan target of 32.5 million acres for securing substantial increases in foodgrains production.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: May I know whether it is a fact that in West Bengal the cash crop jute is being encouraged more and West Bengal has become a famine-stricken area chronically. I should like to know how much cultivable waste land has been brought under cultivation by the Government in order to increase food production and the extent of food production increased thereby.

SHRI S. D. MISRA: The food production increase is as follows. In the pre-Plan period, i.e., at the end of 1950-51 it was 55 million tonnes and now at the end of the Third Plan it is 88 million tonnes, for which we have the latest figures.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He wants to know the increase due to new lands brought under cultivation.

SHRI S. D. MISRA: It relates to foodgrains and non-foodgrains. I am talking of foodgrains at the moment. I have figures which indicate that in 1949-50 we had 248.7 million acres under the plough for foodgrains. By the end of 1963—these are the latest figures available with me—it is 292.3 million acres under foodgrains. Therefore, obviously there is an increase of about 44 million acres. This is by way of reclamation and other measures.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Ever since June 1948 when the late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru made his celebrated broadcast over the All India Radio promising food self-sufficiency by the end of 1952, we have been hearing about this food self-sufficiency.

Now, may I know how much food-grains would be imported this year and how much the Government contemplate importing next year and what steps Government are taking concretely in this matter in order to reduce imports and bring about improvement in agricultural production by radical agrarian reforms, instead of make-believe Plans?

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: This declaration has been made not only by us, but this declaration has been made by many other countries, including the socialist countries that they would reach food self-sufficiency at an early date. As far as the agricultural programme is concerned, it is being realised more and more. It is a very difficult thing to bring about change and even in totalitarian countries where it is possible to bring about agrarian changes in a revolutionary manner, they find it difficult to increase food production. But I can assure the hon. Member that it is our intention to improve and as the figures will show we have made some improvement. With the application of new techniques we hope to increase it at a faster rate in the coming years.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: He has not answered my question. How much imports will there be?

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: As much as Russia imported.

SHRI D. L. SEN GUPTA: West Bengal earns for India a large amount of foreign exchange both from the tea industry and jute industry. May I know whether, because of raw jute being difficult to get from Pakistan, the Government of India has sent any directive to the State Government to convert paddy land into jute-producing land? That is my first question. My second question is, if any paddy-producing land has been converted into jute-producing land, what is the area of such land?

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: It is true that in Bengal large areas have gone under jute production, but jute also

we require for the purpose of earning foreign exchange. Now, our statistics show that after taking a jute crop it is possible to get foodgrains produced like paddy or maize or some other thing. Therefore, even in the case of jute-producing lands, we can get a changed crop. That is what we are attempting. Apart from jute production in Bengal, my hon. colleague has given the figures with regard to the total increase in the country with regard to foodgrains production, but unfortunately it is not adequate to the population growth and various other causes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question.

सूखा और बाढ़ से फसल की क्षति

* 7. श्री महावीर दास : †

सरदार राम सिंह :

श्री दत्तोपन्त ठेंगड़ी :

श्री गोडे मर हरि :

क्या खाद्य, कृषि, स.मुदायिद विकास और सहकारिता मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि चालू वर्ष में देश के कई राज्यों में सूखा और बाढ़ से फसल की अत्यधिक क्षति हुई है ; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो प्रत्येक राज्य में कितनी क्षति हुई है ?

‡[DAMAGE TO CROPS DUE TO BROUGHT AND FLOODS

*7. SHRI MAHABIR DAS:†

SARDAR RAM SINGH:

SHRI D. THENGARI:

SHRI G. MURAHARI:

Will the Minister of FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that considerable damage has been caused to

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Mahabir Das.

‡[] English translation.