

ports have been increased while the emolument of the Kandla Port Secretary has not been increased ?

SHRI C. M. POONACHA : The information I have with me is that the work handled at Kandla port is much less than that at Cochin and Visakhapatnam.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA : May I know whether he has tried to verify the facts about the volume of the work handled or he is purely going by the brief received from the three Port authorities ?

SHRI C. M. POONACHA : I have the figures not only for this year but for the three previous years as well and comparing these figures I have come to the conclusion that the workload at Kandla is not as heavy as in the other two ports of Cochin and Visakhapatnam.

PL-480 AGREEMENT

*307. SHRI MAHAMMED HANEEF :†
SHRI M. N. GOVINDAN NAIR :

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

(a) the date when the present PL-480 food agreement between India and the U.S.A. is expiring; and

(b) whether Government propose to initiate talks for a fresh similar agreement with the U.S.A. ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI P. GOVINDA MENON) : (a) The present PL-480 Agreement was entered into in September, 1964 and has been amended from time to time by exchange of letters providing supplementary funds. The last such amendment was made in May, 1966. No date as such for the expiry of the present PL-480 Agreement has been stipulated. However, the quantities of about 2.75 million tonnes of wheat and about .75 million tonnes of milo, funds for which were provided in May, 1966, are expected to be shipped by October, 1966 and December, 1966 respectively.

(b) Yes, Sir.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Mahammed Haneef.

SHRI MAHAMMED HANEEF : May I know how long this situation of food shortage in India will be compelling our Government to approach friendly countries abroad for aid ?

SHRI P. GOVINDA MENON : So long as production is not sufficient for our requirements we may have to depend upon foreign countries.

SHRI MAHAMMED HANEEF : A news item was published in 'The Statesman' of the 3rd August under the headline 'Reports About India' saying that Canadian newspapers have been publishing reports that are humiliating to India that the food situation in the Indian sub-continent is so hopelessly out of control that people pick up food from cow dung to feed themselves. Has this come to the notice of the Government and may I know whether the Government has taken any steps for contradiction of the same ?

SHRI P. GOVINDA MENON : I have not seen that report, but I can say that the report is not correct.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH : May I know, Sir, whether it is a fact that the US Government have proposed that henceforth payment for food imports from the USA should be made in dollars ? If so, the freight charge and the cost of the food in dollars are likely to increase to a huge proportion. How do the Government propose to meet the situation in this respect ?

SHRI P. GOVINDA MENON : It is understood that Public Law 480 would cease to be in force by the end of December, 1966 and it is understood that a new legislation known as Food for Freedom legislation is on the anvil of the United States Congress. What the hon. Member has stated is correct. The provision as it is of that legislation on the anvil appears to be that the US President may negotiate and carry out agreement for the sale of agricultural commodities for dollars on credit terms or for foreign currency. That is the provision. It is open to the US Administration to sell it for dollars on credit or for foreign currency.

श्री रामकुमार भुवालका : माननीय मंत्री जी यह बतलाने की कृपा करेंगे कि क्या

यह बात सच है कि अमेरिका के पंपरों में यह खबर छरी है कि वहा का सरकार 25 प्रतिशत कम गेहूँ बाहर के मुल्कों को सप्लाई करेगी ?

SHRI P. GOVINDA MENON : As I have said, these wheat supplies are being made as per agreements entered into from time to time and allocations made. There is no information that any allocation already made is going to be reduced.

SHRI N. SRI RAMA REDDY : I would like to know whether any assessment has been made of the difference likely to be made between the present system of obtaining surplus food from the United States of America and the new system that is likely to be introduced under this Food for Freedom legislation.

SHRI P. GOVINDA MENON : The new legislation is still on the anvil of the US Congress and we do not know what final form it would take, but according to the provision as it is we may have to pay in dollars, if we want to take food from them, repayable in thirty or forty years later on.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA : May I know whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to a press report that the surplus of wheat in America next year will be only 11.2 million tonnes and may I also know if the Government have booked the entire surplus of next year ?

SHRI P. GOVINDA MENON : No, Sir, as I said, the latest agreement between the United States Administration and our Government was in May, 1966. If further allotments are to be made, new agreements have to be entered into. There is no question of booking all the surplus available in the United States.

SHRI SITARAM JAIPURIA : In view of the fact that the US Administration may ask for payment in dollars, has the Government assessed as to what would be the exact amount in dollars that we would have to pay extra on this account and, also, what arrangement is being made by the Government in this respect? Are they negotiating with the U.S. Administration that they should not take the money in dollars but only in the same currency as heretofore ?

SHRI P. GOVINDA MENON : Before the final form of the new legislation is known, the Government will not enter into any negotiations with the US Administration.

श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरडिया : श्रीमन्, यह बतलायेंगे कि अंतिम एग्रीमेंट मई में हुआ था और उसके बाद हमारे यहाँ रुपये का अवमूल्यन हो चुका है। पहले हमारे यहाँ गेहूँ 36 रुपये क्विन्टल आता था और अब अवमूल्यन के परिणामस्वरूप 56 रुपये क्विन्टल यानी 20 रुपये क्विन्टल ज्यादा महंगा आयेगा। इस मूल्य को कम करने की दृष्टि से कोई नैगोसिएशन डिवाल्चूएशन के बाद किया गया है अथवा नहीं? अगर नहीं किया गया है तो क्यों नहीं किया गया और किया जा रहा है तो क्या किया जा रहा है?

SHRI P. GOVINDA MENON : On account of devaluation the price we have to pay for the US wheat will go up.

SHRI CHITTA BASU : May I know, Sir, whether it is a fact that there is a proposal before the United States Congress to the effect that the US will not supply wheat to those countries which are having trade relations either with Cuba or North Vietnam? If it is a fact, what is the reaction of our Government towards it?

SHRI P. GOVINDA MENON : I am not aware of that proposal.

DESERT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

***308. SHRI SITARAM JAIPURIA :** Will the Minister of FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry has recently chalked out a plan for setting up Desert Development Projects;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal; and

(c) the progress so far made in the setting up of Land Reclamation Corporation ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION (SHRI S. D. MISRA) : (a) Yes, Sir.