

"Government of Goa". May I know when Goa had a Government? Is it Administration or Government?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: I think it is Administration. Maybe I have committed a slip. I think, I said Government has approached the Goa Administration. I am sorry for that. Thank you very much for that.

SHRI A. D. MANI: Has Government decided that this Academy should be located only in Goa? If for any reason land is not available or if some difficulties arise, do Government have an alternative site in mind?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: It was on the recommendations of the various Committees and Boards that we have selected Goa for this purpose. I think there should be no difficulty about selecting a site or getting a site. At any rate, there are hardly any prospects of difficulties arising in this regard.

SHRI N. M. LINGAM: As the merchant navy is growing, do Government consider the capacity of the training ship 'Dufferin' adequate for the intake of future candidates? If not, what steps do Government propose to take to increase the intake of trainees in the "Dufferin"?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: Perhaps, the hon. Member is aware—he may recall—that we increased the strength of the 'Dufferin' from 50 to 80 in recent years. Similarly, we have increased the strength of the trainees at the Directorate at Calcutta and it is now 100. And I think both these are, by and large, meeting the requirements. But sometimes there is a shortage. We also do not propose to create a situation whereby the marine engineers and navigation officers should be waiting for jobs because that also will not be good. We are trying to balance the two. Whenever any situation arises, we may take special steps as we did last year.

•574. [The questioner (Shri *Maha-bir Dass*) was absent. For answer, vide cols. 4197—4200 *infra*.]

•575. [The questioner (Shri *B. K. Gaikwad*) was absent. For answer, vide cols. 4199—4200 *infra*.]

PROCUREMENT OF PADDY FOR RICE MILLS IN ASSAM

fSHRI BABUBHAI M. CHINAI:
SHRI C. D. PANDE:
•576. SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP
SmHA:
SHRI DAHYABHAI V.
PATEL:

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

(a) whether any representation has been received by Government from the Rice Milling Industry in Assam regarding the difficulties faced by them in running their mills because of the inadequate supply of paddy by the Apex Co-operative Society; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken by Government thereon?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI A. M. THOMAS): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The scheme of procurement of paddy direct from the cultivators through co-operatives was introduced in Assam by the State Government

The difficulties faced by the rice mills in Assam were examined in consultation with the State Government. According to the State Government, the unsatisfactory production of paddy in the State has been responsible for low procurement and consequent insufficient supply of paddy to the mills.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Babubhai M. Ohinai.

SHRI BABUBHAI M. CHINAI: May I know what is the monopoly procurement of paddy through the Assam Apex Co-operative Society Ltd. for the years 1960-61, 1961-62 and 1962-63?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: I have got figures with me of procurement of paddy in Assam—

1959-60	..	113 thousand tons.
1960-61	..	85 thousand tons.
1961-62	..	58 thousand tons.
1962-63	..	55 thousand tons,

(upto 31-5-63)

SHRI BABUBHAI M CHINAI: In the light of the figures given by the hon. Minister, it seems that the procurement is going down every year. Is there any proposal to look after the units which have been sanctioned by the Government, that is, 400 rice-milling units and also 600 husking units? Is there sufficient paddy for these units? If not, why were licences for the extra 200 units given?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: It is true that the capacity of milling available in Assam is surplus to the requirements of the State of Assam. This monopoly for procurement and distribution of paddy under State trading has been entrusted by the State Government to co-operatives functioning in the State. There is a three-tier system—there is the apex marketing society, there is the primary society and there is the service co-operative also functioning. Of course, there have been difficulties in the matter of procurement; there have been defects also in the system, and we have been bringing to the State Government's notice repeatedly the complaints from the millers about the unsatisfactory nature of procurement. But the State Government think that in order to give encouragement to the co-operative societies this system has to be continued.

SHRI C. D. PANDE: In view of the fact that the Apex Co-operative

Society is not able to supply a sufficient quantity and that the monopoly is not working satisfactorily, may I know whether the Government will relax the rule regarding the procurement of rice or paddy by the millers?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: It is a matter which has been left to the State Government—procurement—and in fact, the State Government themselves have said that although certain initial difficulties were experienced in the implementation of the scheme, now things are better. But the shortfall in procurement is primarily due to a shortfall in production also there and they say that the shortcomings as and when noticed are being removed. The State Government also recently appointed a Commission to go into this matter. In fact, a few days back I had a discussion with the Chief Minister also regarding this. I brought to his notice the concern felt even by the Central Government about the unsatisfactory nature of procurement. He said that co-operatives had to be encouraged. We are also of that opinion. I think, Sir, the State Government would be doing everything that is possible in order that the procurement system may be satisfactory.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Is Government aware that this monopoly procurement by the so-called apex societies has been held to be in contravention of the articles of the Constitution both by the High Court and the Supreme Court?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: There has been a judgment and in the light of that, suitable modifications have been made in the procurement system.

SHRI A. B. VAJPAYEE: Are we to understand that monopoly procurement has been discontinued?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: No, Sir. It is not the question. As I have already said, there is the apex marketing society. That is responsible for

paddy procurement. It has left it to the primary society and the primary society procures it through the service co-operative society, and in the light of the judgment, suitable modifications have been made.

SHRI BAHARUL ISLAM: May I know whether it is a fact that in order to discredit and frustrate the paddy procurement policy of the Government, the agents of the rice-millers in Assam are purchasing paddy at prices much higher than those fixed by the Government?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: There have been such loopholes also. Also, these loopholes were brought to my notice when I visited Assam. The Millers' Association waited on deputation. They presented a memorandum also to the Minister of Food and Agriculture and we have examined them in consultation with the State Government. I think the hon. Member will appreciate the limit to which the Central Government can act in this matter.

SHRI SITARAM JAIPURIA: It is not very unusual for the Central Government to side-track the issue by saying that it is a State subject. But in view of the fact that the former Food Minister had at a Press conference on the 17th May said that the Assam Government's experiment of procurement through co-operatives had miserably failed and also in view of the Supreme Court judgment, will the Central Government now issue a directive to the State Government to stop procurement in this manner and allow the rice-millers to procure directly as before?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: There is no question of issuing any directives. As I have already said, suitable modifications have been made in the procurement system in the light of the judgments of the High Court and the

Supreme Court. Apart from that, the remedy, according to me, lies in strengthening the co-operative sector in Assam. I think the State Government has to devote its energy in that direction. As I have already said, there is no question of any directions being issued. The State Government is the best judge of what should be the procurement machinery there. And when I brought this fact to the notice of the Chief Minister, he also said that the experience of entrusting this procurement with the rice-millers had been quite unsatisfactory and they had been putting up the prices like anything and that after that system had been introduced, at least there had not been any undue profiteering.

SHRI S. C. DEB: As far as procurement in Assam is concerned, may I know what the quantity procured in the last few years by mills and small units is as compared to Government's procurement?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: Legally, Sir, the millers cannot procure because the societies are entrusted with the task of procurement but all the same, as I have already conceded, there have been loopholes. In fact, the millers have been procuring directly from the producers with the consent of the co-operative machinery also. In fact, the co-operative machinery has been getting the commission and then the millers are being asked to procure. Such instances also have been brought to our notice.

SHRI BABUBHAI M. CHINAI: May I know how many of the husking units are unauthorised and what steps Government have taken to bring them under the purview of the law?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: I do not know whether there are any unauthorised mills. The State policy is governed by the Rice-milling and Regulation Act under which licences have to be obtained.