

require further investigations extending over a period of another two years before we could arrive at some kind of a project to be finally considered?

SHRI J. S. L. HATHI: Yes, Sir. Before we can prepare the complete project, it will require further investigations and this will take two years more.

SHRI GOPIKRISHNA VIJAIVAR-GIYA: May I know whether the Pakistan Government is also concerned with this Farakka Barrage?

SHRI J. S. L. HATHI: They have shown interest in the project and they wanted to know what the scheme was.

SHRI GOPIKRISHNA VIJAIVAR-GIYA: Will they be co-operating with the Indian Government in this Barrage scheme?

SHRI J. S. L. HATHI: That is for them to say.

RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED BY CENTRE IN REGARD TO FOOD POLICY

*10. SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Will the Minister of Food AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether he is aware of any public statement made by the Food Minister of Uttar Pradesh as reported in *The Statesman*, Calcutta Edition of October 23, 1958 to the effect that "the State Government is not free to determine its own food policy or to take measures to lower rising food prices, for it had to depend on the food policy formulated by the Centre";

(b) whether the Central Government imposed any restrictions on the Government of Uttar Pradesh in regard to the latter's food policy and measures to deal with rising prices;

(c) if so, what were these restrictions; and

(d) whether any representation was made by the State Government to the Centre in regard to these restrictions?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI A. M. THOMAS): (a) Yes, but the Minister for Food and Civil Supplies, Uttar Pradesh, subsequently published a clarification in connection with his interview with the Press. A copy of his letter to the Editor of the *Hindustan Times*, published in the issue of October 30, 1958, is placed on the Table of the Sabha.

(b), (c) and (d). No specific restrictions were imposed by the Centre on the Uttar Pradesh Government, but their proposal to ban the export of gram and peas from Uttar Pradesh could not be agreed to as that would have adversely affected the interests of other States.

Press cutting from the Hindustan Times dated 30th October 1958

LETTERS

INCORRECT REPORTS

Sir, when I visited Gorakhpur recently, some Press correspondents met me there at their own request, and I discussed with them the food problem in Uttar Pradesh. I find that my talk with them has caused certain misunderstandings and misapprehensions, more on account of the headlines that some of the newspapers gave than on account of anything I stated on that occasion.

For example, some of the newspapers have published a sort of warning of a new food crisis in the State in two months' time; but this is not exactly what I said. While discussing the high prices prevailing in different parts of the State, I remarked that although the price of rice ought to come down now because of the new harvest, so far as wheat, gram and peas were concerned, the new crop would not be in for another four or five months and, if anything, there would be less of these foodstuffs available after two months than now. Why this statement was interpreted as a warning of a new food crisis, I cannot understand.

Similarly, as regards the relations between the State and the Centre, I was asked by the Press representatives why the State does not impose a ban on the movement of gram, peas and pulses as it had done in the case of wheat and rice. They further said that the Central Minister for Food had categorically stated that the States had vast powers in the matter of food and could take any action they liked.

It was in connection with this that I told them that the authority of the States and the Centre was defined by the Essential Commodities Act, which was a Central legislation and the powers which were mentioned therein in respect of food-grains could only be exercised by the States if they were delegated to them by the Centre.

I gave several examples of this, including the right to control the percentage of flour to be extracted from wheat by the flour mills about which I have been hearing complaints for a long time. It was also in this context that I said that I had asked for the necessary authority to ban the movement of gram and peas from the State, but so far the Centre had not replied.

Some papers further reported me as saying that "we have seized 1,50,000 maunds of wheat" instead of gram. About wheat, I actually said that we were not able to seize much because evidently the stocks had been dispersed by the interested parties and we could not trace substantial quantities of it in spite of our best efforts.

We were, however, able to seize about 2,00,000 maunds of gram and 40,000 maunds of peas from various places and we are using most of it to provide seed to cultivators.

Yours, etc.,

ALI ZAHEER,

(Minister for Food and Civil

Supplies, Uttar Pradesh.)

Lucknow.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: After the truth is let out, clarification follows, I know. May I know whether the Government is aware that the Food Minister of U.P. had said that the Centre was largely responsible for prices shooting up and that the State was helpless to check the prices as the Centre did not permit the State Government to exercise control on food, the control that it desired to exercise, under the Essential Commodities Act?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: I have placed before the Sabha the letter which was written by the author of the alleged statement. He has clarified his position. He has further stated that what he had stated at Gorakhpur was that the authority of the States and the Centre was defined by the Essential Commodities Act which was a Central piece of legislation and that the States could exercise only such powers under the Act as were delegated to them by the Centre. I may also inform the House that all the powers that were asked for by the U.P. Government have been delegated to that State.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: May I know whether the clarification covers this statement, namely, the Food Minister of Uttar Pradesh said that he was for controlling the export of gram and pulses but that the Centre was not agreeable. Further, he regretted the anomalous situation—I quote here—"...seeing that the same political party ruled both at the Centre and in the State". I want to know whether any clarification has been forthcoming with regard to this particular statement which has been quoted here.

SHRI A. P. JAIN: So far as the question of export of gram and peas is concerned, it is a fact that the Uttar Pradesh Government suggested to the Centre that the export of these two commodities from Uttar Pradesh should be stopped. We examined the whole situation. Now, Uttar Pradesh produces more than 90 per cent. of the peas. Uttar Pradesh also imports more of gram and exports less of it. Uttar Pradesh wanted that it should be allowed to import gram and not to

export it. We thought that this would adversely affect the food situation in other States. Excepting for three subjects, the State Governments have been given all the powers to control the situation. The three subjects are price control, bank transactions and regulation of transport. If one State Government bans export, the other Governments would be adversely affected. In order that one State may not be adversely affected by the action of another State we have retained these powers.

SHRI Z. A. AHMAD: In view of the fact that the prices of foodgrains in Uttar Pradesh have not registered any notable decline, did the Government of India not take the interests of the consumers of Uttar Pradesh into consideration when it decided not to accept the recommendations of the State Government?

SHRI A. P. JAIN: The Government of India equally takes into consideration the interests of all the citizens of India, not of any particular State.

SHRI Z. A. AHMAD: In view of the fact that the foodgrain prices in Uttar Pradesh are still at a high level and have not registered any decline excepting rice—barley, gram and wheat are still at a higher level—did the Government of India take this factor into consideration when taking that decision?

SHRI A. P. JAIN: I think it would be totally wrong that the State which produces more than 90 per cent. of a particular commodity should be allowed to keep the whole of it to itself and deprive the rest of India of the use of that commodity.

ENQUIRY INTO THE LOSSES OF THE INDIAN AIRLINES CORPORATION

*11. **DR. R. B. GOUR:** Will the Minister of TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Short Notice Question No. 8 in the Rajya Sabha on September 25, 1958, and state whether

a Committee has since been appointed to enquire into the losses of the Indian Airlines Corporation; if so—

(a) who are the members of the Committee;

(b) whether the Committee has submitted its report; and

(c) what action Government have taken or propose to take on the recommendations of the Committee?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI AHMED MOHIUDDIN): Not yet, Sir.

(a) to (c). Do not arise.

DR. R. B. GOUR: How long will it take the Government to appoint a Committee to go into the cost structure of the Indian Airlines Corporation?

SHRI AHMED MOHIUDDIN: I expect that it will be appointed soon.

DR. R. B. GOUR: Soon means what?

MR. CHAIRMAN: "Soon means what?" That is what he asks.

DR. R. B. GOUR: Exactly, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is the time-limit?

SHRI AHMED MOHIUDDIN: We have had some difficulties. I cannot say what will be the meaning of soon but we are trying to expedite.

DR. R. B. GOUR: What are the difficulties? That is what we would like to know.

(No reply)

SPREAD OF CANCER IN ASSAM

*12. **SHRI LILA DHAR BAROOAH:** Will the Minister of HEALTH be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that cancer is spreading rapidly in the State of Assam; and