

to the interior. Of course, difficulties of roads are there.

IMPORT OF FOODGRAINS

*583. SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state the quantity of foodgrains imported from abroad during the period 1st April, 1957 to 31st October, 1957?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI A. M. THOMAS): 23-34 lakh tons.

SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD: May I know what are the grains which are being imported?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: Out of this 23-34 lakh tons, 18-67 lakh tons of wheat and 4-67 lakh tons of rice.

SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD: May I know whether it is the intention of the Government to meet the food deficit with these grains that are being imported?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: Yes, Sir; and also to build buffer stocks.

SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD: May I know if we can meet the situation by importing coarser grains?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: We have some idea to import some quantity of coarse grains too.

SHRI P. S. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: May I know whether this figure is included in the import programme under P. L. 480?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: Yes, Sir.

SHAH MOHAMAD UMAIR: May I know in what proportion these coarse grains are distributed to different States, particularly to Bihar?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: The quantity of wheat at present with the Central Depots and the State Government is about 85,000 tons.

SHAH MOHAMAD UMAIR: Has the Central Government got any vigilance over the proper distribution of these grains in different States?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: The distribution of grains allotted to the State Governments, as hon. Members know, is the responsibility of the State Governments. With regard to distribution from Central Depots, of course it is the responsibility of the Centre. And we have our own supervisors and food inspectors who will also be inspecting Fair Price Shops that are being controlled by the State Governments.

SHAH MOHAMAD UMAIR: Is the Government aware that in the different States distribution is not being made properly?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: It has been admitted on the floor of this House at the time of the Food Debate that there had been certain drawbacks in distribution in the initial stages. Now, most of them have been remedied and the distribution machinery is now more or less satisfactory.

SHRI KISHEN CHAND: May I know what has been the result of their efforts to import larger quantity of rice from Burma, Laos and Cambodia?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: The House knows that we are going to import 7,000 tons from Viet Nam and we have got a firm commitment with Burma to import five lakh tons. Besides that we would desire to import some more quantity of rice, but no firm commitment has been entered into with any country.

SHRI P. S. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: May I know what is the cost per ton of foodgrains imported and what is the foreign exchange involved in these imports?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: The cost of these 23-34 lakh tons which have been imported from April to October will be Rs. 107 crores and 73 lakhs.

SHRI D. A. MIRZA: May I know how long we are going to continue importing foodgrains from foreign countries and is this not a strain on our foreign exchange position and are they going to put an end to this or not?

MR. CHAIRMAN: All things have an end.

SHRI D. A. MIRZA: Would it not affect the execution of our Second Five Year Plan?

MR. CHAIRMAN: They realise it.

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: It has been realised that this importing mentality should cease but when it has to be put a stop to is something different. We cannot afford to see our people starving in the country.

SHRI D. A. MIRZA: Will the country become self-sufficient at all?

(No reply)

COLLISION OF PASSENGER TRAINS AT THE KOSMA RAILWAY STATION ON NORTHERN RAILWAY

*584. SHRI AMOLAKH CHAND: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that two passenger trains collided on November 8, 1957 at the Kosma Railway Station on the Northern Railway;

(b) if so, what is the number of persons injured and what is the extent of loss incurred by the Railways; and

(c) what are the causes of the collision and what is the nature of punishment awarded to the persons responsible for it?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN): (a) Yes.

(b) Thirty-eight persons were injured, of whom 4 received grievous injuries. All except one have since been discharged from the hospital.

The approximate cost of damage to Railway property was Rs. 23,082.

(c) Train Nos. 1 SF and 2 TF were scheduled to cross at Kosnia. No. 1 SF was first received on the loop line at 15-31 hours. On account of incorrect setting of points No. 2 TF also arrived on the same line and collided with No. 1 SF at 15-47 hrs.

The fixation of responsibility for the accident is under investigation. Meanwhile, the Station Master, Kosma, is kept under suspension.

SHRI AMOLAKH CHAND: May I know the number of accidents to passenger trains in the months of October and November?

MR. CHAIRMAN: He wants to know the total number of accidents in the months of October and November of [this year.

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: I shall require separate notice for that question.

SHRI AMOLAKH CHAND: May I know the number of persons who have been injured in the recent collisions during the months of October and November?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: It is entirely a separate question. The hon. Member must table a separate question.

SHRI AMOLAKH CHAND: May I know for how many days these injured persons were kept in hospital, who received grievous injuries?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: That depended on the type of each injury. Some persons were discharged after seven days, some after twenty-one days.