

SHRI O. SOBHANI: How many new sugar factories are likely to be put up in the near future and in what States?

SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI: I think at least six of them will be ready to be erected.

PROF. G. RANGA: In what States?

SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI: Mostly in the South.

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY: Is it a fact that when the hon. Minister tried to justify the import of sugar he did not say at that time that the consumption of sugar had suddenly shot up, but said that he was importing merely to stabilise the price which had gone beyond even his most capable hands?

SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI: I will request the hon. Member to refresh his memory of what I said last year, and then put me the question.

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY: May I know what the hon. Minister said? From our memory it appears that he said that he was importing merely to stabilise the price and not to supplement the supply to meet the increased consumption of sugar.

SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI: I never thought I would be fool enough to waste the country's foreign exchange for stabilising the price. I think consumption of sugar has gone up and because of the shortage prices have gone up.

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA: Is it with the object of gaming the Rs. 8 per maund as import duty that this sugar is being imported?

SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI: Beg your pardon?

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA: Is it for getting the Rs. 8 per maund of import duty that sugar is being imported from other countries?

SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI: The hon. Member has forgotten that the rules have changed since he was a school teacher and that now caning is prohibited.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMA-NAND: How does the hon. Minister reconcile the increase in consumption of sugar with the lower purchasing power of the people?

SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI: How can I say?

MR. CHAIRMAN: This increased consumption of sugar—how is it consistent with the low purchasing power of the people?

SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI: It only shows that there is some disparity, that on the one hand there is less purchasing power and on the other those who can entertain are entertaining people more and more.

PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION OF RICE

•106. SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Will the Minister for FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the production and consumption of rice during the years 1951, 1952 and 1953; and

(b) the stocks of rice with Government at the end of each of those years?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA): (a) The figures of internal production of rice and of imports from abroad are as follows:—

Year	<i>(Figures in '000 tons)</i>	
	Internal production	Imports
1951	20,251	749
1952	20,741	722
1953	23,424	190

There is no information about the total consumption of rice in the country but the offtake of rice from Government stocks was as follows: —

(.Figures in '000 tons)

Year	Offtake
1951	3,063
1952	2,471
1953	1,966

(b) The stocks of rice with the Central and State Governments at the end of 1951, 1952 and 1953 were as under: —

Year

(.Figures in '000 tons)

1951	412
1952	624
1953	507

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Will the hon. Minister explain why although the production is higher in 1953, the offtake from the Government shops has gone down.

SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI: The hon. Member would have noticed that in the previous years we were importing something like 7 million, 8 million and 9 million tons, but last year we imported only 150 lakh tons.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: I am only referring to the figures given here. Production in 1952 is given as 207 lakh tons and in 1953 it is 234 lakh tons. The import has gone down by 3 lakh tons whereas the production has increased by 27 lakh tons.

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: That is because when agriculturists grow more, they eat more.

SHRI H. D. RAJAH: In the President's Address it was said that 5 million tons have been produced this year. How does that compare with the figures that the hon. Minister now quoted?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: I did not catch the question. Will you please repeat it?

SHRI H. D. RAJAH: In the course of the President's Address, it was stated that during the last year 5 million tons more of rice had been produced. How does it compare with the figures now given?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: That figure relates to the total of all food grains and not merely rice.

SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI: The hon. Member has completely forgotten what was said there. What was said there was that there was an increase of 5 million tons between the years 1951-52 and 1952-53.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Could the hon. Minister tell us if the figures of production now being supplied are correct and whether he has any doubt about the figures as he had about figures that were being given out in earlier years and, if so, whether that doubt still persists?

SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI: I think the hon. Member forgets that there has been a gap of one year between 1951-52 and 1953-54. There is the year 1952-53.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: That is not my question, Sir; he is replying to the other question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He wishes to know whether your figures are correct.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Does the hon. Minister himself rely on them?

SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI: After seeing what happened in the country, I did not give much importance to the statistics when I started dealing with this Ministry and I declared then that our statistics were all wrong.

SHRI H. D. RAJAH: That is what our Chairman said the other day.

SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI: The position today is that rice is available and wherever we had stopped pro-

curement, prices, instead of going up, were going down. We have already stopped procurement in Punjab and in Uttar Pradesh and the prices have come down in some places by Rs. 4. When we stopped procurement in Bengal, prices of paddy went up only to Rs. 6 per maund while we were purchasing at Rs. 7-8-0 and Rs. 8-8-0 per maund. We thought that we would be able to purchase two or three lakhs of tons but even though the procurement went up to six lakhs of tons the prices did not go up. Similar is the case in all these districts. Rice is available in plenty everywhere, and wheat consumption is going down while rice consumption has gone up.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Sir, is it true that the hon. Minister has stated somewhere that he intended to do away with the Food Ministers in the States just as the employees in some of the Food Departments have already been done away with? If that is true, when does he think that that object will be realised?

SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI: I will try to remove myself from the present post as soon as possible.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Now that the stock is 5-7 lakhs of tons, may I know as to what stock the Central Government consider necessary to have with them before they can do away with controls?

SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI: We consider that we should have a Central stock of ten lakh tons before we can take the risk of allowing free sale.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Has not the Government already contracted with Burma for the import of rice which will bring up the stocks to ten lakh tons, and do I understand that then the Food Ministers, including the Food Minister of the Centre, will be eliminated?

SHRI C. G. REDDY: Liquidated.

SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI: I do not think the Food Ministry will be

liquidated but we are negotiating for the purchase of rice from Burma. If it materialises, what I propose to do is to distribute that rice in the deficit States; there are only two deficit States, Travancore-Cochin and Bombay. The other States have produced sufficient to cover their requirements and have some surplus also. I will distribute what I purchase in Burma not only to meet the requirements of rationing shops but also to enable anybody to purchase to his maximum requirement. In the surplus States whatever I propose to give to them will form a reserve and in all it will be more than ten lakh tons this year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is a long speech, Mr. Kidwai.

PRICE OF SUGARCANE

*167. SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Will the Minister for FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the acute dissatisfaction prevailing among the cane-growers in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar with the present minimum price fixed for sugarcane; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to revise the existing minimum price?

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (DR. P. S. DESHMUKH): (a) No. The recent agitation for a higher cane price was the result of advice given to the cane-growers by interested parties.

(b) No.

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY: And who were the interested parties, Sir, with whom the sugarcane growers did not themselves cooperate in withholding their sugarcane from the mills?

SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI: Some political parties did that thinking that they will get some political advantage by saying that they will get higher prices.