

COUNCIL OF STATES

Monday, 2nd March 1953

The Council met at two of the clock in the afternoon, MR CHAIRMAN in the Chair

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

IMPORT OF RICE

*150. SHRI M. VALIULLA: Will the Minister for FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state.

(a) the quantity of rice imported from China and Burma during the years 1951 and 1952,

(b) the quantity of rice which India is expecting to obtain from these countries in 1953, and

(c) the names of other Asian countries which supplied rice to India in 1951 and 1952 and the quantity supplied by each of them in each of those years?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA): (a) The quantity of rice imported from China and Burma during the calendar years of 1951 and 1952 were as follows:—

	1951	1952
	Tons	Tons
China	65,800	147 700
Burma	304,200	375 600
TOTAL	370,000	523,000

(b) It will not be in public interest to disclose this information

(c) Thailand and Pakistan are the other Asian countries which supplied rice to India during the calendar years 1951 and 1952. The quantity supplied by each of them is as follows —

	1951	1952
	Tons	Tons
Thailand	216,200	184,500
Pakistan	157,800	13,700
TOTAL	374,000	198,200

SHRI M. VALIULLA: Is it not by virtue of a contract entered into with Burma that we are getting rice from that country?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: In 1948 there was an international emergency council which used to allocate rice to India. This council allocated from 1948 to 1950. From 1950 to 1952 there was no allocation and we used to get, if and when required, rice from Burma. From 1952 onwards we have entered into an agreement for four years with Burma for the supply of 350,000 tons of rice every year.

SHRI M. VALIULLA: So, that is the amount received from Burma in 1952?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA. Yes, 350 000 tons

SHRI M. VALIULLA: Is that the quantity we expect in 1953 also?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA. Not exactly. That is the minimum allotment or allocation that is to be made for India in case the rates are favourable and India desires to purchase it.

SHRI M. VALIULLA: Under this contract with Burma you have contracted to purchase 3½ lakh tons from 1952 onwards. Is that not the contract entered into by the Government of India? Is that the fact?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: The contract is, whenever Burma has a surplus of rice it allocates it to various purchasing countries and she will have to reserve at least 350,000 tons for us.

SHRI M. VALIULLA. Was not the answer given by the hon. Minister that India has entered into an agreement with Burma to get rice for four years at the rate of 3½ lakh tons per year?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: It is nothing obligatory on our part.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If we ask, they must supply us so much, but we need not ask. Supposing the rice production

is quite good, we may not ask. So the contract does not compel us to buy even this quantity

SHRI J. R. KAPOOR: Sir, what is the price per maund we pay for the rice we get from Burma and China respectively?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: I am not prepared to give the prices. The prices differ again, from £50 per ton to £60 per ton.

SHRI J. R. KAPOOR: What is the actual price that we pay for the rice that we imported from Burma in 1951-1952 per maund? There is nothing secret about it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is competition in prices and other people may come to trouble.

SHRI RAFI AHMED KIDWAI: Rice is supplied every six months from Burma, and China supplies rice at prices almost the same as that we pay to Burma.

PROF. G. RANGA: If we get rice every six months, what is the average price we have agreed to pay to Burma? In view of the fact that there is no competition in prices between Burma and China; as they charge, according to the hon. Minister, the same price, he can give us this information.

SHRI RAFI AHMED KIDWAI: It has been the practice not to reveal the prices for the current year. In 1949, I think we paid Burma £38 per ton, that is about Rs. 19/- per maund. And the last price we paid was about £55 per ton.

SHRI J. R. KAPOOR: At what price is this rice supplied to the consumers?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: We have to subsidise the imported rice when supplying it to the consumers.

SHRI B. RATH: Does the Government of India enter into contracts with private companies for the supply of rice from Burma and China?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: There is no question of entering into contracts with private persons or companies in Burma. We have entered into an agreement to get 3½ lakh tons every year; 230,000 tons at a government-to-government level, and the rest by private trade.

SHRI B. RATH: If it is a contract between the two countries at a government-to-government level, what is the harm in giving out the import price for 1953?

SHRI RAFI AHMED KIDWAI: For 1953 we have not yet imported any rice, nor have we placed any order.

SHRI B. RATH: If he has not placed any order for 1953, does the hon. Minister consider that the country will be surplus in rice in 1953?

SHRI RAFI AHMED KIDWAI: We have not placed any orders yet. We are negotiating with different countries and we will purchase from the cheapest place.

SHRI B. RATH: What is the total deficit expected in 1953?

SHRI RAFI AHMED KIDWAI: I think it will be a surplus, not a deficit.

SHRI S. MAHANTY: Is it a fact that Burma is increasing the price of its rice?

SHRI RAFI AHMED KIDWAI: It is in the papers also.

MR. CHAIRMAN: They do not follow any paper.

SHRI RAFI AHMED KIDWAI: The price fixed for the current year was £60 per ton.

SHRI S. MAHANTY: Then will China also not increase the price?

SHRI RAFI AHMED KIDWAI: China has not yet agreed to supply; we are awaiting the reply.