

FAMINE IN BOMBAY STATE

♦303. SHRI D. NARAYAN: Will the Minister for FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount so far given by the Government of India to Bombay State for famine relief?

(b) whether Government are aware that there is severe scarcity of drinking water in hundreds of villages in famine stricken areas of Maharashtra; and

(c) if the answer to part (b) above be in the affirmative what measures are being taken by Government for affording immediate relief?

THE MINISTER FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAPI AHMED KIDWAI): (a) (i) The Government of India have sanctioned a loan of Rs. 151.3 lakhs for minor irrigation works in the scarcity areas of Bombay.

(ii) The Government of India have agreed that imported wheat issued to persons employed on relief works in the famine or scarcity affected areas of Bombay, should be charged for by the Centre at a specially reduced price of Rs. 14 per maund upto a limit of 2 lakh tons.

(b) Yes.

(c) The State Government are deepening and boring the existing wells as well as supplying water in bullock carts or, tankers to the villages where scarcity of drinking water exists.

COMMONWEALTH AGRICULTURAL BUREAU

*315. SHRI S. N. DWIVEDY: Will the Minister for FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the constitution of the Commonwealth Agricultural Bureau;

(b) how long India has been associated with the above organisation;

(c) the amount contributed by India so far to the Bureau and what is her annual contribution thereto; and

(d) in what way India has been benefited by being associated with this Bureau?

THE MINISTER FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAPI AHMED KIDWAI): (a) A statement is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix IV, Annexure No. 142.]

(b) Since 1929.

(c) £ 1,38,500 and £ 8,568.

(d) The benefit accrues to scientists and research workers in the country who are enabled to keep abreast of results of research elsewhere in agricultural sciences from the regular stream of up-to-date scientific information, disseminated by the Commonwealth Agricultural Bureau.

LAND RECLAMATION IN TRIPURA

*317. MUNSHI ARMAN ALI: Will the Minister for FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received a representation from peasants, of Udupur, Tripura for reclamation of Suksagarjala; and

(b) whether it is a fact that the said reclamation, if effected will add five hundred acres of good paddy-land?

THE MINISTER FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAPI AHMED KIDWAI): (a) Yes.

(b) Yes..

LOAN OF RICE TO CEYLON

*318. SHRI S. MAHANTY: Will the Minister for FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any rice has been loaned by the Government of India to the Government of Ceylon; and

(b) if the answer to part (a) above be in the affirmative, the quantity of the rice loaned and terms and conditions of the loan?

THE MINISTER FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAFI AHMED KIDWAI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A quantity of about 15,000 tons of rice was loaned to Ceylon during September and November 1952 on condition that the Government of Ceylon returned during March 1953 an equal quantity of rice of the same quality and at the same godowns from which delivery was given.

FLAG DISCRIMINATION

*404. SHRI GOVINDA REDDY: Will the Minister for TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is "Flag Discrimination" in favour or against the Merchant Navy of India;

(b) the ports in which "Flag Discrimination" against India is complained of;

(c) the steps taken by the Government of India to protect the "Flag" of the Indian Merchant Navy; and

(d) the port in which the Merchant Navy is discriminated against under what is known as "Customer Preference"?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN): (a) and (b). There is no clear and generally accepted definition of the term 'Flag Discrimination' in shipping circles. Different persons have given different interpretations to it at different times. In terms of the International Maritime Ports Convention of 1923 to which India is a party, discrimination between ships of different flags in such matters as port facilities (such as berthing, loading and unloading facilities) and port dues (such as tonnage, harbour, pilotage and lighthouse charges) can be said to clearly constitute flag discrimination. In this sense it cannot be said that there is any flag discrimination either in favour of or against Indian ships at any port in India or outside India.

(c) Does not arise in the light of the answer given to parts (a) and (b) above.

(d) A shipper at any port—Indian or foreign—is in fact in a position to choose the particular ship by which his cargoes are to be shipped and as "customer preference" is a term which is difficult to define, more so the point where such preference passes over into the field of flag discrimination, it is not possible to say in which part or parts of the world such preference is exercised to the disadvantage of Indian shipping.

CARGO LIFTINGS IN COASTAL AND ADJACENT TRADES

♦405. SHRI GOVINDA REDDY: Will the Minister for TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of cargo liftings in the coastal trade of India during the years 1949-50, 1950-51 and 1952-53;

(b) the quantity of cargo liftings in the adjacent trades during each of those years; and

(c) the reasons for the decrease or increase in both kinds of cargo liftings?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN): (a) and (b). A statement giving the required information is laid on the Table of the House.

(c) So far as cargo figures carried on the coast are concerned, the comparatively higher lifting during 1949 is attributable to the Railways taking more of their coal requirements in South India by sea during that year. As regards cargo figures relating to the adjacent trades, since complete figures are not available it is not possible to say whether there were any variations and if so the reasons therefor.