

press report in the Indian Express of 30th May, 1968 to the effect that as many as 15 persons died in the Garo Hills due to starvation and mal-nutrition; and

(b) if the answer to part (a) above in the affirmative, whether any investigation has been conducted by the Government of India if so, the details of the findings ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE) : (a) and (b) The State Governments who are concerned with relief of distress due to natural calamities enquire into cases of alleged starvation deaths. The Government of India have no separate machinery for investigating such reports and refer to the State Governments all cases brought to their notice. A copy of the Press Report in question was forwarded to the State Government who have stated that enquiries into thirteen alleged starvation deaths have revealed that the deaths were not due to starvation.

APPLICATIONS FOR TELEPHONE CONNECTIONS IN MADRAS

283. SHRI K. SUNDARAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of applications for getting telephone connections in Madras city under the priority and exempted categories under consideration of Government; and

(b) what are the reasons for the delay in disposal of these applications?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL) (a) The total number of pending applications under priority Category now known as special category in Madras City is 176 of which 69 relate to Mount Rd. Exchange, 30 to Chrompet Exchange and the balance to the other 12 exchanges in Madras City.

(b) Due to lack of exchange capacity, only 30% of the waiting list under Special Category at Mount Road can be given within the existing capacity and this is expected to be cleared within the next three months and the rest will be wiped out only after completion of exchange expansion which is expected to take a year.

The clearance of waiting list at Chrompet Exchange under Special Category is likely to take some time as, to instal additional equipment, there is no space in the present building. Some rearrangements of areas is contemplated and most of the applicants would be given telephones by the end of this year. The applications pending under Special Category in all other exchanges are expected to be cleared within the next three/four months.

It may be stated here that only 15% of the available capacity is now reserved for applicants under Special Category in the City of Madras.

रेलवे के कुलियों तथा वेंडरों के रहन सहन की दशा

284. श्री राम सहाय : क्या श्रम तथा पुनर्वासि मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या हाल ही में कुछ संसद सदस्यों ने रेलवे के लगभग दो लाख कुलियों और वेंडरों के रहन सहन की दशा सुधारने के लिए कोई ज्ञापन प्रधान मंत्री को दिया है; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो इस सम्बन्ध में सरकार द्वारा क्या कार्यवाही की गई है ?

†[LIVING CONDITIONS OF RAILWAY COOLIES AND VENDORS

*284. SHRI RAM SAHAI: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether some Members of Parliament have recently submitted a Memorandum to the Prime Minister for improving the living conditions of about two lakhs of railway coolies and vendors; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken by Government in the matter ?]

श्रम तथा पुनर्वासि मंत्री (श्री जयसुखलाल हाथी) : (क) कुछ संसद सदस्यों ने रेलवे पोर्टरों और वेंडरों के राष्ट्रीय संघ की मान्यता दिलाने के लिए प्रधान मंत्री को एक ज्ञापन दिया था ।

†[] English translation.

(ख) चूंकि कमीशन पर काम करने वाले लाइसेंस-प्राप्त पोर्टर और रेलवे वेंडर रेल कर्मचारी नहीं हैं, अतः उनकी यूनियन संघ को मान्यता देना सम्भव नहीं था।

†[THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI) : (a) A memorandum seeking recognition of National Federation of the Railway Porters and Vendors was submitted to the Prime Minister by some Members of Parliament.

(b) As the licenced porter and railway vendors working on commission basis are not railway employees, it was not possible to agree to recognition of their Union/Federation.]

CROP ESTIMATES AND COST OF PRODUCTION

285. SHRI A. G. KULKARNI : Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Central Government have any agency of their own to collect reliable crop estimates in the various States at State level or whether they depend on the estimates of the State Government; and

(b) whether the Central Government have also any agency to ascertain the cost of production of various agricultural products, like wheat, rice, millet, Jawar and Bajra and what are the main criteria on which the cost is ascertained ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE): (a) The estimates of area and production of various crops issued by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture are generally based on information furnished by the State Governments. The area estimates are based on complete field-to-field enumeration in most of the States and on a sampling basis in some others. The estimates of yield are based on crop-cutting experiments conducted by the State Government agencies. The Directorate of National Sample Survey, in the Department of Statistics, is responsible for technical guidance, coordination and supervision of the crop-cutting experiments conducted by the State Governments.

†[] English translation.

(b) Neither the Central Government, nor the State Governments, have regular machinery for ascertaining the cost of production of various agricultural crops on a continuous basis. However, farm management investigations, cost of cultivation enquiries and farm records projects, carried out on an ad-hoc basis, in selected areas provide some data on cost of cultivation of some crops. The estimates of cost of production are worked out taking into account different components, such as various inputs, human and bullock labour, rent or rental value of land, depreciation on fixed capital, interest and other miscellaneous charges including land revenue, irrigation charges, etc. The detailed principles followed in the valuation and allocation of different costs are indicated in the Reports giving the results of Studies as have been published.

The Ministry set up a Standing Technical Committee in February 1967, for the purpose of providing necessary guidance in organising the collection of data on indices of input costs and also in organising cost of production surveys on an integrated basis. Necessary action is being taken on the recommendation of the Committee for organising surveys of cost of cultivation of principal crops in the country on a continuous basis.

FOODGRAINS DEFICIT IN WEST BENGAL

286. SHRI CHITTA BASU : Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) What is the estimated deficit of foodgrains in West Bengal for the year 1968-69;

(b) how Government propose to meet the deficit;

(c) what is the total procurement of foodgrains in West Bengal as on 1st June, 1968; and

(d) the reasons for the shortfall of the procurement programme in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE) : (a) In the absence of a scientific survey regarding consumption of foodgrains, it is difficult to estimate the requirements and consequently the extent of deficit. The Government of West Bengal have, however,