

# Weekly Notes

## More Heat Than Light

SHRI KIDWAI has passed on the baby to the Indian Society of Agricultural Statistics whom he has asked to settle the dispute between the Indian Council of Agricultural Research which is under his Ministry and the National Sample Survey which comes under the Ministry of Finance. It is good strategy to ask a scientific body to intervene in a controversy among scientists. While the Food Minister shows refreshing candour in expressing his own bewilderment that his Ministry should estimate food production at 49 million tons when the National Sample Survey estimates it at 68 million tons, his concern for the timeliness of these statistics and repeated mention of random sampling and scientific methods do these not suggest a distinct preference for sampling as against complete enumeration, and raise the suspicion that the village records on which his own Ministry has been working, through crop cutting experiments, to evolve more reliable estimates, are already doomed?

It is not food statistics alone on which Shri Kidwai seeks light from this learned body. But surely, all the problems of the Grow More Food Campaign are not of advanced statistics nor can they be solved by statisticians. One may humbly submit, for instance, that cultivators are fertile minded enough. In the South, years before the war, producers of rice had been using ammonium sulphate. Cultivators would take any amount, provided they can get it at a price which they can pay. It is a travesty of truth to suggest that fertilisers are not moving fast enough because the farmer does not know their use. Instead of consulting statisticians, had the Food Minister looked more closely in the organisation for distribution and relative prices of fertilisers and different crops, he would have easily got more light.

## Calendar Reform

THERE was a time when the calendar could be reformed by the Imperial Decree in Rome or by a Papal bull. Now it has to be done by the UNO who have before them a proposal by the World Calendar Reform Association for the revision of the Gregorian calendar. Pandits here have been disputing the problem for long.

They have formed themselves into two major groups and the Panjikas or Panchangs that are now current, bear the stamp of the particular authority according to which they have been compiled. The elates of important celebrations, pujas for example, differ in consequence, causing much inconvenience to lots of people.

The Indian Calendar Reform Committee under the chairmanship of Prof Meghnad Saha has been entrusted with the task of examining all the existing calendars which are being followed in this country to submit proposals for an accurate and uniform calendar for the whole of India after a scientific study of the subject. The final report of the Committee is to be submitted within a year. It is horrifying, however, to be told that if the calendar is to be made really scientific, the week will have to be dropped from the computation of time. What will happen to the weeklies then? Surely the Committee is not thinking of anything so abominably scientific?

## ECAFE Survey

ECONOMIC developments in the countries of the ECAFE region during 1951 and the first half of 1952 merely emphasise the vulnerability of these countries to international economic disturbances. The large foreign exchange earnings of the period of the Korean boom were largely frittered away. And in any case, because of the prevailing high prices and other factors, they did not lead to any acceleration in the pace of economic development. The subsequent heavy fall in prices disorganised development plans and produced a deflationary effect which still persists. The worsening of the terms of trade which took place in all but the rice exporting countries caused a fall in real income, particularly in those countries which exported raw materials and imported manufactured commodities. These are the major conclusions of the belated survey for 1951 just received along with the expedited publication of the 1952 report. The inclusion of Japan is a new feature which merits separate treatment attempted in a special article elsewhere in this issue.

While there was a definite slackening of demand during this period, there was also an improvement in

the supply position in response to the high prices prevailing earlier. By 1951, when demand took a sudden downturn, the world supply of raw materials had increased quite substantially. This improvement was partly due to the development of substitute materials in industrial countries, a tendency which is continuing in spite of declining prices. In consequence of this, the supply potential today is much greater than existing demand. Increases in demand are, therefore, quite likely to be met without any increase in prices, at least until the limits of elastic supply are reached. The ECAFE countries can no longer expect to gain from any increases in demand from the West as they did from the post-Korean boom when it was prices more than sales volumes that pushed up their export receipts. While the countries of the region will certainly gain if the upturn in United States production and imports continues, they will have to take note of this basic change in the situation.

## Pharmaceutical Enquiry

A committee of enquiry has been appointed for the pharmaceutical industry to

The Study the working of the existing pharmaceutical manufacturing concerns with special reference to the demand for the drugs produced and their essentiality the cost of production, the efficiency of the processes employed and whether the product is made from imported intermediates and penultimate products or from basic raw materials and chemicals;

(2) Study the operations of foreign and Indian concerns who import drugs and pack them here and the extent of tie-up between the wholly or partly owned Indian concerns with foreign companies;

(3) Recommend steps for encouraging the manufacture of important drugs now imported;

(4) Enquire into the scheme of distribution of pharmaceutical products whether imported or manufactured or packed in India, the profit margins to trade or industry and the part played in this by purely Indian as well as other concerns; and

(5) All ancillary matters connected with these.

There have been frequent complaints about the preparation and sale of spurious drugs and of profiteering.

**President's Rule for Pepsu**

**T**HE unseating of the Pepsu Chief Minister Sardar Gian Singh Rarewala by the Election Tribunal has produced yet another crisis in this, the only State with a non-Congress Ministry. President's rule for Pepsu is being talked of. At least, according to newspaper reports, the Pepsu Chief Minister discussed it last week with the Central Minister for Home Affairs and States. Whatever the final outcome of these talks, the fact that President's rule can be thought of as a solution brings out an aspect of our Constitution which rarely comes to light. It is an unpleasant reminder that inspite of its general federal character, the provisions in it for dealing with abnormal situations make it essentially unitary.

The emergency provisions contained in Chapter 17 of the Constitution deal with different kinds of situations. Article 356 provides for the case of a failure of constitutional machinery in the States. "This article enables the President, by Proclamation, to assume to himself all or any of the functions of the Government of the State and all or any of the powers vested in or exercisable by the Governor or Rajpraiukh". It is difficult to follow, however, how the President can make use of this article. For the President has to be satisfied on receipt of a report from the Governor or Rajpramukh or otherwise, "that a situation has arisen in which the Government of the State cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution." Now the Constitution permits a person, even if he is not a member of the legislature concerned, to be a Minister for a period of six months, within which he must obtain election if he is to remain in office. In fact the appointment of Shri Morarji Desai as Chief Minister of Bombay even though he had been defeated in the General Elections, set a precedent in this direction which can be followed in Pepsu without breach of propriety.

It is suggested by news reports that "startling political alignments" and the deteriorating law and order situation in Pepsu are the main factors which may drive the Central Government to take action. As far as the "startling political alignments" are concerned, the Constitution does not support such a justification for the use of the emergency powers. Article 352 of the

Constitution does provide, however, for a deteriorating law and order situation. It states that "If the President is satisfied that a grave emergency exists whereby the security of India or of any part of the territory thereof is threatened, by . . . internal disturbance, he may, by Proclamation, make a declaration to that effect". Does the situation in Pepsu constitute a grave emergency"? If it does not—by no stretch of imagination can it be said that it does—there is no justification for establishing President's rule, whether under Article 332 or under Article 356. If the law and order situation is deteriorating, something should no doubt be done about it, but President's rule is certainly not the remedy. Article 256

The executive power of every State shall be so exercised as to ensure compliance with the laws made by Parliament and any existing laws which apply in that State, and the executive power of the Union shall extend to the giving of such directions to a State as may appear to the Government of India to be necessary for that purpose".

This should meet the case, if deteriorating law and order situation in Pepsu is the real problem.

**Development Scheme for Andamans**

**T**HE five-year development and delorestation scheme for Andamans is expected to cost a net amount of Rs 23 lakhs only, according to a note laid on the table of the Council of States last week. Against a total estimated cost of Rs 40; lakhs, the revenue anticipated from sale of timber is estimated at Rs 380 lakhs.

The work of clearing 20,000 acres of forests started in December last and this land will be distributed to 4,000 agriculturist families from India in the next five years. Each family will receive in addition to the live acres for paddy cultivation another five acres of hilly land for use as homestead land, for growing fruit and vegetables and for pasture. Each family will also be planted a loan of Rs 2,000 to meet expenditure on house-building, purchase of bullocks, agricultural implements, seeds and manure, maintenance till the first crop is harvested and the cost of passage to the Andamans. For some time land revenue will not be collected. When it is levied it will be Rs 3 per acre. As a result of the scheme vice production is ex-

pected to increase by 2 lakh maunds

The estimates of expenditure and receipts for the five-year period are as follows:

Expenditure	Rs lakhs
Forest Department	3,27.30
Non-recurring expenditure	65.75
Recurring expenditure	10.00
Advances (recoverable)	80.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>483.05</b>
<i>Receipt</i>	<i>a</i> Rs lakhs
Forest Department	3,80.00
Recovery of advances	80.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,60.00</b>

Recurrent expenditure alter the five-year period on the maintenance of roads, policing and provision of civic; amenities, etc, is estimated at Rs 4 lakhs.

*Letter to the Editor*

**Bokaro Power Station**

**I**N your editorial, "DVC Delivers the Goods" you have made much of the difficulties encountered by the DVC in importing 6,000 tons of steel. In the same paragraph you mention that it was necessary to import this steel from the US to enable the work to be completed on time and without going into undesirable structural changes.

Obviously the design of the Station was based on using structural steel per American standards and which are not rolled locally. Don't you think that this situation could have been avoided if our engineers had investigated this problem in the preliminary stage when the structural design could have been suitably modified to use such sections of steel as are rolled locally? In the circumstances one can only infer that this aspect was completely ignored by the engineers in charge of the project, either due to carelessness or ignorance.

Frankly, I cannot think of any special reasons the engineers have, in using sections rolled only in the US.

*'Curious'*

Bombay Feb. 27.

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