

SRI LANKA



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ADEQUATE STOCKS OF ALL CONSUMER GOODS

Stern measures against hoarding, blackmarketing

A joint communique issued by the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Commerce, Trade, Food and

Shipping, states that there will be adequate stocks of all consumer goods that are generally in demand for the Sinhalese and Hindu New Year season and that there is no necessity to pay exorbitant or excessive prices.

ADEQUATE STOCKS OF ALL CONSUMER GOODS

[Special Conference]

Meanwhile the Minister of Finance, Mr. P. B. G. Kalugalle, has declared that he will not hesitate to take severe and drastic measures against all traders found guilty of hoarding foodstuffs and other goods.

The apparent shortage in certain types of textiles has been created artificially but the Government will ensure that stocks are replenished immediately and supplies made available through the C. W. E. in time for the Sinhalese and Hindu New Year.

The strictest vigilance will be exercised by the Ministry of Commerce, Trade, Food and Shipping to prevent the exploitation of the public by unscrupulous traders. Stringent measures will be taken against hoarding and blackmarketing, adds the communique.

'No secret message'

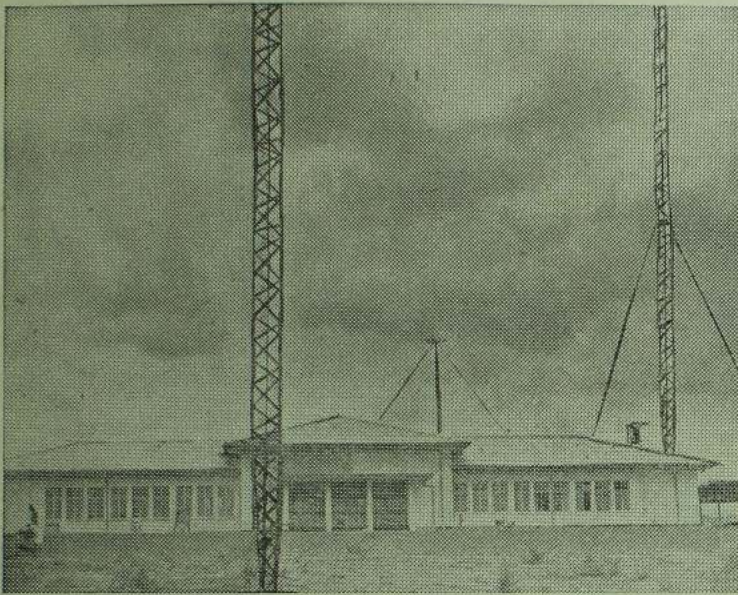
A news report which appeared in the "Ceylon Observer" of 25th March, originating from Cairo under the caption "Secret Message from Premier to Nasser", states that a top secret message from Ceylon's Prime Minister on the Sino-Indian dispute was conveyed to President Nasser, last night and that the message might be a new move on the dispute. The report further states that Mrs. Bandaranaike has not yet replied to an earlier message from Mr. Ali Sabry urging her to use diplomatic channels to secure implementation of the Colombo Powers proposals.

In this connection, the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs, would like to state that in accordance with the practice of sending copies of correspondence that have been exchanged over the Sino-Indian dispute to Heads of State and Governments of the six countries concerned, the Prime Minister has sent a copy of her latest communication to Mr. Chou En-Lai, to President Nasser for his information. The Ceylon Ambassador in the U. A. R. was directed to deliver this communication to President Nasser. "The Top Secret Message" referred to in the press report presumably relates to this communication. The Prime Minister has not received the message from Mr. Sabry referred to in the news report.

NO HARDSHIP

THE Department of Examinations has reported to the Ministry of Education that no candidate has been handicapped in the matter of pursuing higher studies or obtaining employment as a result of the delay in the issue of examination certificates.

According to the report, the Examinations Department has an arrangement whereby candidates in need of professional qualifications to be furnished to educational bodies or prospective employers can get this done by application to the Department. The Department furnished an official statement direct to the educational body or prospective employer in every such case, free of charge.



April 4th will be a red-letter day in the history of Radio Ceylon. From that day Sinhalese listeners will be able to listen to a separate programme from the new transmitting station at Diyagama. The new service will be inaugurated by the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike. The picture shows the new transmitting station at Diyagama. (See also page 2).

MORE SCIENCE ASSISTANTS FOR SCHOOLS

Under a new scheme drawn up by the Department of Education, Government schools in the Island will be provided with Science Assistants for work in standards 6, 7 and 8 on the basis of one teacher for 200 units of average attendance in these classes.

A school will usually have one Science Assistant, but if there are more than 200 units of average attendance in these classes, the school may have two Science Assistants.

Under this scheme the Department will also provide specialist teachers to schools outside the normal eligible quota.

The Specialist teachers are—

- Handicraft teachers excluding those who are regarded as secondary trained teachers.
- Music and Dancing teachers.
- Art teachers.
- Agriculture teachers.
- Physical Training Instructors.
- Sinhalese Assistants in Muslim schools.
- Science Assistants in Swabasha schools.
- Commercial teachers.

In addition, English Assistants will also be appointed to these schools to teach English in Standard 3 and above. For an average attendance up to 150 in Standard 3 and above, there will be one English Assistant. If the average attendance is 300 in these classes, there will be two English Assistants. For an average attendance of 450 and over, there will be three English Assistants, but no more. This rule has been introduced so as to give an equitable distribution of the available English Assistants among all schools.

The Department has instructed all Assistant Directors of Education in charge of Regional Offices to make sure that specialists teachers appointed for special work were provided with the required minimum hours of work in their special subjects. They have been told that if this was not possible in respect of any teacher, such a teacher should be considered an excess teacher and be moved out.

AUSTRALIAN AID FOR 'GROW MORE FOOD' DRIVE

THE Ministry of Agriculture, Land, Irrigation and Power, has accepted an Australian Government Aid project which is aimed at increasing food production in Ceylon by the promotion of the use of fertilizers.

Fertilizer use in Ceylon is already well established on plantation crops mainly tea and rubber, but it has been found necessary to demonstrate the advantages of fertilizer application to paddy cultivators and subsidiary foodstuffs growers in order that they may increase yields.

Among other things the Australian project will seek to—

- survey the existing agronomic, economic and production position of fertilizer;
- lay out fertilizer application trials on the main soil groups in Ceylon;
- demonstrate on a wide scale throughout Ceylon the use of fertilizers in farmers' fields;
- wherever possible introduce in addition to fertilizers, the use of crop management practices;

Mr. Kalugalle said that the conference was specially summoned to discuss the situation caused by the rising prices of consumer goods and to explore ways and means of curbing the activities of anti-social elements who were solely responsible for this situation.

The Minister also observed that he had received numerous complaints from consumers that the unscrupulous traders were sending underground large stocks of sarongs, popular fabrics, foodstuff, motor spares, &c., with a view to creating artificial shortages.

The conference decided to take all possible steps to prevent such shortages.

- tram Ceylonese personnel in the methods of demonstrating the use of fertilizers.

Another aspect of the project is a complete fertility cum fertilizer survey of Ceylon, which will seek to ascertain the present and future needs for fertilizers. Such a survey has been considered very necessary for Ceylon as the effect of the increased use of fertilizers should be estimated in terms of agricultural production and foreign exchange balances. Also such a survey will include a complete study of the economics of distribution, marketing, storage of fertilizers and agricultural credit facilities available to farmers for the purchase of fertilizers.

Under this project a complete study will be made of the feasibility of manufacturing fertilizers in Ceylon on a commercial scale and if fertilizer manufacture is a sound economic proposition the size of the manufacturing unit, and where it should be located, &c.

Additional transmission for Sinhala listeners

APRIL 4th—RED-LETTER DAY IN THE HISTORY OF RADIO CEYLON

APRIL 4th will be a red-letter day in the history of Radio Ceylon. From this day, Sinhalese listeners will get an opportunity of listening to a separate programme. The English and Tamil listeners already enjoy facilities of listening to items other than the normal broadcasts, e.g., foreign stations, &c. From its inception 38 years ago, Radio Ceylon has not afforded to the Sinhalese listeners anything other than the normal transmissions.

It will be appropriate at this stage when an additional transmission is being provided for Sinhalese listeners, to trace the history of broadcasting in Ceylon. The first experiment in broadcasting was made in Ceylon in 1923. The experiment was conducted in a small room in the C. T. O. with the playing of music over a gramophone. Engineers of the Telecommunication Department pioneered the experiment. The first transmitter used by them was picked up from a German submarine.

December 16, 1925, may be regarded as the date when the experiment was successfully completed. From this date onwards, there have been various events which could be regarded as landmarks in the 38-year-old history of broadcasting in Ceylon. In 1926, a studio was opened at the Ceylon University buildings. One year later, announcing cubicles and control rooms were built at Torrington Square. In 1934, an Advisory Board was set up.

In 1940, a Special Committee was set up under the chairmanship of Sir

Kanthiah Vaithianathan. At that time, there were 10,000 licence-holders in the island. A temporary shift of the Radio Station from Torrington Square to Cotta Road, Borella, took place during the war days of 1942. In 1947, the station returned to its former buildings with modern equipment and facilities, and a full-fledged radio station was born in September, 1949.

Another important factor as a result of the war was the handing over of SEAC radio equipment to Radio Ceylon. The Commercial Service was thus born. Work on the buildings of the Commercial Service commenced in 1953, and was completed one year later.

As a result of the decision to have a medium-wave transmission for Sinhalese listeners, the new transmitting station at Diyagama was built. The 160-acre block, acquired by the Government for the purpose, has been cleared and buildings with modern equipment have been put up. It is interesting to note that, whereas in 1940, there were 10,000 licence-holders, today there are 370,000.

The new service will be inaugurated on April 4, at 6.30 p.m., with a message to the Nation, by the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike. From then on, if you tune in at 6.30 p.m. daily, you will hear a variety of items on the new evening transmission of the Sinhalese Service.



A worker tuning in to his favourite programme for relaxation after a hard day's work

No special request to the UAR

A news item which appeared in the late edition of the "Ceylon Observer" of the 14th of March, under the title "Colombo Proposals, move to persuade China", states that Ceylon and Burma have made a joint request to the UAR to use its good offices to get China to accept the Colombo Proposals, that at the request of Ceylon and Burma, Mr. Sabry is visiting Peking and that the UAR has suggested to Ceylon that, in the event of its efforts with China meeting with failure, the six Colombo Nations should send a joint cable to Mr. Chou En Lai asking for a positive reply to the Colombo Proposals. The information contained in this report is entirely without foundation, states a press release issued by the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs.

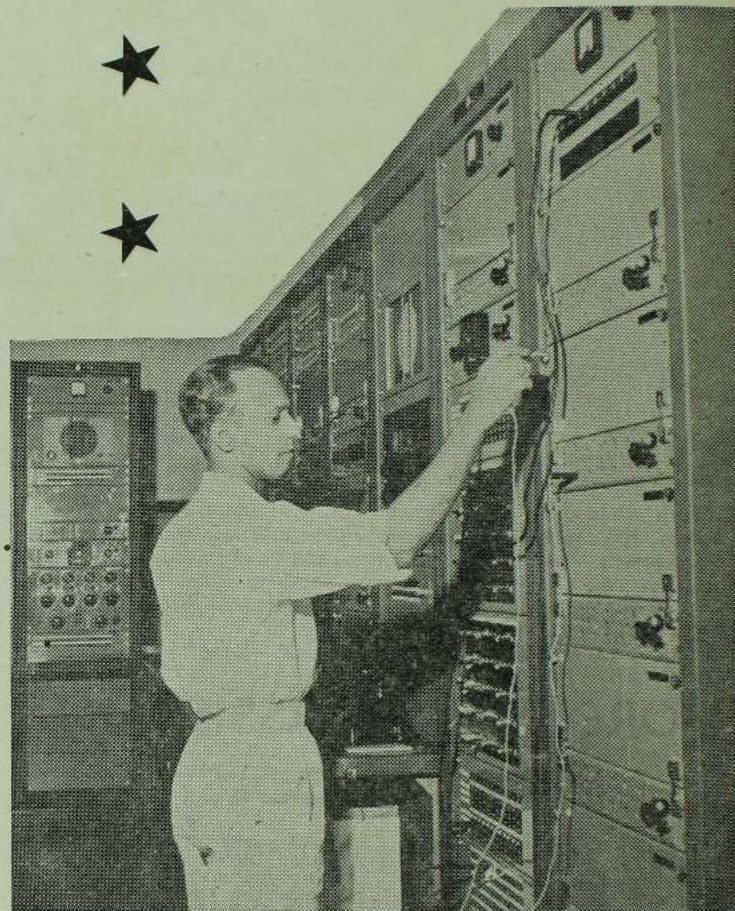
As far as Ceylon is concerned, she has not made any special request to the UAR to use its good offices with the People's Republic of China. The forthcoming visit of Mr. Ali Sabry to Peking is not in response to any suggestion made by Ceylon, but it is in

acceptance of an invitation extended to Mr. Sabry by the Prime Minister of China to visit China. In fact, it was the Ceylon Prime Minister who transmitted this invitation from Prime Minister, Chou En Lai to Mr. Sabry, when she met him in New Delhi, last January. Ceylon is also not aware of any suggestion from the UAR referred to in the article that the six nations should send a joint cable to Prime Minister Chou En Lai asking him for a positive reply to the Colombo Proposals. The impression which the article tries to convey that Ceylon is engaged in behind the scene moves on her own initiative is therefore completely false.

Syrian Government recognised

THE Government of Ceylon has recognised the new Government of Syria, and the Hon. Prime Minister has sent the following message to His Excellency Mr. Salah El Dine Bitar, President of the Council of Ministers and Minister of Foreign Affairs:

"I am glad to inform you that the Government of Ceylon has, with effect from today, recognised your Government. I take this opportunity



A control room at Radio Ceylon



A children's programme in progress

to send my best wishes for the success of your Government and the prosperity of the people of Syria. My Government looks forward to the

continuation and even further strengthening of the friendly relations existing between our two countries."

THE FOOD WE IMPORT

THE present food drive must be purposively directed towards the saving of our foreign assets by producing locally whatever foodstuffs that could be grown economically in Ceylon, in order to replace what we now import from other countries.

Let us therefore take a close look today at the major items of food we import and examine how far we can work towards this objective.

Rice is the largest item and imports have cost us Rs. 283 million in 1959, Rs. 242 million in 1960 and Rs. 217 million in 1961. It would be observed that the expenditure on rice imports have declined during these 3 years by about Rs. 68 million. This has been due partly to a fall in prices, but chiefly due to increase in local production. In 1961 as much as 57 per cent. of the quantity of rice we consumed in Ceylon was produced locally. 340,000 tons of local rice entered the rationing scheme through the Guaranteed Price Scheme in 1961 as compared with 285,000 tons in 1960. This is indeed a creditable achievement, but it is obvious that we have still a long way to go to be able to do without imports. Our present yields are about 38 bushels of paddy per acre and it is obviously possible to double them if we follow the examples of countries like Japan where the average yield is as high as 90 bushels per acre. If we double our yields, we can be self-sufficient. This is the challenge that faces us today—a challenge we can well meet and in fact easily meet if we are determined to do so. In the meantime it might as well be mentioned that we can help reduce our imports of rice if we consume less rice. Our diet, like the diet of people in several other countries in Asia consists largely of carbohydrates derived from rice. Nutritionists believe that the content of carbohydrates in our diet can well be reduced and replaced by other types of food. At the worst, carbohydrates can also be obtained from other starchy foods like yams which we can produce without much effort in our back gardens.

The next single largest item in our food bill is sugar, which cost us Rs. 75 million in 1959, Rs. 79 million in 1960 and Rs. 78 million in 1961. This is an article of food which we cannot do without and in fact should not do without. The average reader can do little, if at all, to help in reducing these imports and we have to look to our sugar factories at Kantalai and Gal Oya to help effect savings in this item as early as possible.

Flour comes a close third in the list with foreign purchases amounting to Rs. 70 million in 1961. As in the case of rice, flour imports have gradually fallen during the last few years due to increased local production of rice. As increased consumption of rice or preparations made of rice in order to replace flour imports would do little good to reduce our rice requirements, here too as in the case of rice, local substitutes in the form of yams are our best hope to effect savings of this item. There is no doubt that the increased production of yams and fruits to replace rice and flour preparations, at least, in our morning meal can go a long way to help during the present crisis.

Meat, fish and egg imports cost us Rs. 72 million in 1961. All these are important sources of protein and we cannot afford to save foreign exchange at the expense of our health. Our hopes in effecting savings in these items should therefore lie clearly in increased local production rather than on restriction of consumption.

Egg imports alone accounted for the loss of Rs. 5 million in 1959, Rs. 4 million in 1960, and Rs. 3 million in 1961. Local production has certainly made great strides in the past few years and self-sufficiency in this regard has been

achieved now. Elimination of imports alone should however not satisfy us. The diet of the vast majority of our people include little of what are known as protective foods. Eggs are a rich source of such protective food and both increased production and increased consumption should be our objective. The breeding of poultry requires relatively low investment, yields comparatively quick returns and is well within the reach of most of us—even those who live within urban areas.

By 'AGRASERVIS'

It is estimated that the per capita consumption of fish in Ceylon is higher than in most Asian countries with the exception of Malaya and Japan. This is not a trend that should be discouraged. But it also means that in the absence of adequate local production, our imports of fish including dried fish has cost us substantial amounts in foreign exchange. Local production in 1961 met only 33 per cent. of total consumption. A heavy programme of investment in developing our fisheries has been undertaken in the coming years.

Milk and Milk Products come next on the list with a foreign expenditure of Rs. 65 million in 1961. As in the case of the earlier group of protein foods, we cannot well effect savings of milk imports until local production is stepped up and the marketing and processing of locally available fresh milk are ready to take the place of imports. Government has already undertaken a vigorous programme of stepping up local production of milk and better utilization of existing resources. The proposed establishment of a Condensed Milk Factory and a Spraying Unit to convert fresh milk into powdered milk by the Ceylon Milk Board are some of the other measures that would be taken to reduce the present drain on foreign exchange in this regard.

We now come to the group of imports which are popularly known as Subsidiary Foodstuffs and which consume a large slice of our foreign assets. In 1961 this group accounted for the loss of Rs. 104 million or somewhat over (six) 6 per cent. of the total value of all our imports.

Dried red chillies topped this group with an expenditure of Rs. 33 million in 1961. Not only has the total volume of imports increased from 14,000 tons in 1955 to 17,000 tons in 1961 but the average consumption has also increased from about 3½ pounds per year per person to over 3½ pounds per year per person during the same period. As this is obviously not in the best nutritional interests of our people, it is clear that the loss on our foreign assets caused by the import of chillies must be saved both by reduced consumption as well as by increased local production. Every householder can help in this two-fold task. We have at least 1½ million homes in Ceylon. A dozen chillie plants at least in each home garden, to start with, can help us a great deal in this respect.

The import of onions of all varieties cost us somewhat over Rs. 21 million in 1961. Red onions which formed only a small part of this cost only Rs. 3 million as the balance of our requirements came from local production. Bombay onions and other varieties cost over Rs. 18 million. Here too as in the

case of dried chillies the total imports have increased from 36,000 tons in 1955 to 57,000 tons in 1961. The consumption per head of population has also increased from 9 pounds to 12 pounds per year during this period. Increased local production, particularly of red onions and reduced consumption of other varieties in the future seems to provide the key for reduced imports.

A similar increase both in the total quantity imported and in the per capita consumption is noted in the case of potatoes. Imports have increased from 40,000 tons in 1955 to 60,000 tons in 1961 and the expenditure has jumped from Rs. 13 million to over Rs.

20 million during this period. Per head of population consumption has risen by 25 per cent. from 10 pounds to 12½ pounds during these 7 years. Owing to its comparative cheapness, we use potatoes chiefly as a vegetable to accompany our plate of rice, but seldom pause to consider that both potatoes and rice are merely two sources of the same type of food, viz., carbohydrates. Potatoes however cannot in fact masquerade for vegetables as vegetables supply other types of nutrients which are vital for our health and well-being. Production of vegetables at least in a small way in home gardens and cultivation of local varieties of yams can well reduce our import bill on potatoes. Local production of potatoes is also going ahead in some parts of the country now.

Pulses such as dhall green gram, etc., were imported in 1961 at a cost of

Rs. 42 million. Pulses, as you know, are again an important source of vegetable proteins, just as much as fish or milk are a source of animal protein. We cannot do without either, and reducing imports of these may well mean a deterioration in the standard of our health. Increased production of crops like green grams and dhall will go some way to reduce imports without affecting consumption.

Among the other minor items which we imported in 1961 must be mentioned Coffee, Tamarind, Turmeric and Garlic. Coffee imports which were in the region of Rs. 3 million till 1960 were restricted in 1961 and imports cost only half a million rupees that year. Tamarind imports were also restricted and cost only 4 lakhs in 1961. Turmeric imports cost Rs. 1.1 million and garlic Rs. 3.1 million in 1961. Except garlic which is a comparatively new comer among crops grown in Ceylon, self-sufficiency in the other items can and must be achieved in the near future.

A proper understanding of these facts and figures are necessary to put us on the correct track in the current food drive. It is clear that the challenge for reducing our food imports bill must be met not only by our farmers—or for a matter of that only by the Government—but by everyone of us. We can all help by producing more vegetables, more fruits, more yams and more of those crops like chillies which we all need and which we never cared to grow ourselves. We can help by changes in our dietary habits, by consuming less of these essentials that we have somehow, perhaps unconsciously, got used to consuming in increasing quantities every year. We can help if we remember that every cent we save by reducing our food imports we make that cent available to import other goods which are solely needed for the economic development of our country.

And if we do not help, or if we are not prepared to help, we can or should blame nobody but ourselves.

Hoarding of foodstuffs, textiles to be prevented

MR. T. B. ILANGARATNE, Minister of Trade, Commerce, Food and Shipping, has issued instructions to his officials to take all necessary precautions to check hoarding of foodstuffs and textiles in the country.

The Minister's order follows reports made that there was a move to create an artificial shortage of foodstuffs and textiles by certain traders with a view to selling the existing stocks at large profits during the coming Sinhalese and Hindu New Year.

The Minister had decided that all available machinery be used to prevent such a situation. Instructions were issued to the Food Commissioner to take action under the Price Control Act, the Director of Commerce to use the powers under the Licensing of Traders

Act and the Import Controller under the Import Control Act.

Meanwhile at a Conference held between CWE officials and the Minister to discuss the food situation and the position of textiles the authorities assured the Minister that there were sufficient stocks of food and textiles to last the festival season. The Minister was told that the CWE was expecting before the end of this month a consignment of 5 million yards of textiles from China and 100,000 sarongs from India.

PLANTING OF CAPSICUM



THE FUTURE OF CHANOS FISH IN CEYLON

CHANOS is a marine fish known locally as Vakka in Sinhalese and Palai meen in Tamil. It is also known as Milkfish in many countries because of its white colour and good taste.

Although Chanos is a marine fish, it tolerates and thrives well in less saline inland waters. It therefore enters estuaries and lagoons in considerable numbers, grows there, and returns to the sea to breed. The food of Chanos consists mainly of aquatic plant life, which is popularly known as parsi in Sinhalese and Tamil. These plants are really thread-like blue-green or green algae which grow abundantly in shallow lagoon areas and tide pools in tidal flats. Chanos is often attracted by this rich growth of food and it remains and grows in such places.

It was perhaps a thousand years ago that people of some of the far Eastern countries, first observed these habits of Chanos, foresaw the prospects of their being farmed and actually commenced chanos farming. According to a well-known authority, W. H. Schuster, "the documented history of ponds in the Philippines, Indonesia and Formosa can be carried back to a point, which on the basis of Hindu-Javanese law codices, may be placed at about A. D. 1,200".

Today Chanos is extensively and very profitable farmed in many Indo-Pacific countries. There are 300,000 acres of fish ponds in Indonesia 200,000 acres in the Philippines, 30,000 in Formosa and 2,000 acres in Hawaii. An idea of the production from these ponds can be had from the fact that the 200,000 acres of fish ponds in the Philippines produces 60,000,000 lb. per annum worth 60,000,000 rupees to those concerned with the industry. This production can be increased several fold, as illustrated by the fact that Formosa with only 30,000 acres of ponds produces 30,000,000 pounds of fish with more advanced techniques.

One would therefore be naturally inclined to ask whether Chanos can be similarly farmed in Ceylon. On the basis of experiments conducted at the

Brackish-Water Experiment and Demonstration Fish Farm in Pitipana (Negombo), the answer is "yes". In an experiment conducted this year, a quarter acre fish pond yielded a harvest of 430 lb. in six months. With suitable pond management it is possible to have two harvests a year. This works out to nearly 3,500 lb. per acre per annum. Chanos fetches a price of about a rupee per pound. This would naturally work out to Rs. 3,500 per acre per annum.

here are a few general points. Brackish-water fish farming can be compared to paddy cultivation in many ways. Mud ponds similar to paddy-fields are constructed in such a way that at least one foot of water can be retained at high-tide or be completely drained at low-tide. Since the tides are important for brackish-water fish farming, the ponds are constructed on land bordering lagoons. It goes without saying that a study will have to be made of the area intended to be converted into fish ponds in order to determine the tidal range over it throughout the year. This will give an indication as to how much excavation will have to be done in order to retain the required depth of water in the ponds. Level tidal flats or mangrove swamps with scanty vegetation should be preferred as this will make pond construction less costly. The soil should be

By T. G. PILLAI

(Superintendent of Brackish-water Fisheries)

Under somewhat less ideal conditions it would not be very difficult for a private Chanos farmer to produce 2,000 lb. per acre per annum. To the small farmer with a half to one acre fish farm this would mean 500 to Rs. 1,000. To the big farmer this would mean that if he has a pond system of 25 acres it would bring in Rs. 50,000 per annum. Although this figure may seem unbelievable high it is well within range of practical possibility.

There are about some 25,000 acres of mangrove swamps, tidal flats and shallow lagoon areas, scattered along the coasts of Ceylon which are suitable for, and can gradually be used for brackish-water fish farming. If each acre could produce two thousand pounds per annum this would work out to an increase of 50,000,000 lb. of fish per annum bringing in 50,000,000 rupees to those connected with the industry.

How would one set about starting a Chanos farm? You should of course, consult the Fisheries Department but

muddy. Soil with much Rock, Sand, Shell or gravel cannot retain much water and is not fertile enough for algal growth. Green thread-like algae and blue-green scums form the food of Chanos under cultivation. Hence the more fertile a soil is the more algae and consequently more fish it can produce.

Besides a few other factors, Chanos fry should be available in quantities sufficient to stock the intended area of fish ponds. In Ceylon Chanos fry are abundantly available along shallow coastal areas and in lagoons and estuaries during two seasons of the year. They can be easily gathered for farming in ponds.

Besides being farmed for food, Chanos can also be farmed for bait. Owing to its brilliant silvery colour and shape it is easily attracts the attention of Tuna and hence is used as Tuna bait in many Indo-Pacific Countries.

Enterprising persons taking to Chanos farming for Tuna bait, will certainly gather much profit to themselves. This will also cut down the imports of other type of Tuna bait from foreign countries. Chanos can be raised to bait size in about 3-4 months in ponds.

Chanos is also useful for improving the production of natural bodies of brackish-water such as certain lakes that get out off from the sea during several months of the year and decrease in productivity due to repeated fishing. For this purpose Chanos fry captured during the breeding season will have to be reared in nurseries till they are about 2 inches long and then stocked in the natural water bodies. If they are stocked during the fry stage they are easily preyed upon by other fish and only a small percentage would finally survive.

A noteworthy feature of Chanos is that it can tolerate and thrive well even in fresh-water. Here therefore is a marine fish that can be farmed even in freshwater ponds or be used for stocking of natural bodies of fresh-water. Indeed, in certain parts of Indonesia, Chanos is farmed with paddy in those paddy-fields in which is retained during several months of the year.

Chanos can also be processed in several ways. For instance, dried Chanos is produced in substantial quantities in the Kalpitiya and Puttalam regions. Smoked Chanos is a delicacy in the Philippines, and its quality compares favourably with imported kippers.

With regard to taste, Chanos is considered a very tasty fish in Ceylon, although it is slightly bony. The Chanos harvested from ponds usually weigh from 1-2 per pound and the bones are softer than that of the larger fish. When cater, fried, the bones are extremely brittle and can be chewed and swallowed with the flesh. In fact many people consider Chanos to be as tasty as Seer fish.

Chanos is the most important fish in the Philippines. Hence it has been declared the National Fish. This fish is abundantly available in Ceylon waters and they are positive indications that it is going to play an important role in the future development of Ceylon's inland fisheries.

W. & O. P. Scheme

A recent article in the press stated that an Actuarial Investigation of the W. & O. P. Scheme is to be conducted in order to give increased pensions to Widows and Orphans. It is correct that the W. & O. P. Office is at present engaged in collecting data required for an Actuarial investigation of the scheme. The purpose of the investigation is to determine whether the present benefits paid are commensurate with the 4 per cent. contribution levied, and also to decide on the possibility of granting several requests made by Public Service Trade Unions and individual contributors. In the meantime, an Actuary from the Government Actuary's Department in London visited Ceylon under the Technical Cooperation Scheme of the Colombo Plan and examined the working of the various W. & O. P. Pension Schemes in Ceylon. His report and recommendations are awaited. A temporary increase on basic Widows' and Orphans' pensions under the Scheme was paid from January 1, 1958, pending the Actuarial Investigation.

The article also suggested that more than 150,000 public servants contributed 4 per cent. monthly to this scheme; that the Fund collects about Rs. 8 million and pays out only Rs. 3½ million to about 9,000 widows; and that the balance is appropriated to Revenue. The correct position is that W. & O. P. Pensions are paid from two sources, viz., (1) the W. & O. P. Fund Account (Ordinance 1 of 1898) and (2) the W. & O. P. Scheme (Ordinance 13 of 1906). The W. & O. P. Fund was closed to new members in 1906 with the formation of the W. & O. P. Scheme. As the last contributor to the Fund ceased contributing in 1941, the Fund received no contributions thereafter other than the annual interest paid by Government. Therefore, the balances to the credit of the Fund gradually dwindled. As the balance to the credit of the Fund was insufficient to make all payments under the Fund, a sum of Rs. 825,000 was transferred from Revenue to the Fund Account in the financial year 1960-61 to meet payments under the Fund. The Government will have to make such payments from General Revenue yearly until all the claims under the Fund are met.

In the case of the W. & O. P. Scheme all contributions are credited to Revenue and all payments are made from Revenue. When the Special Temporary Increase, Cost of Living Allowance and Special Living Allowances paid on Scheme pensions and the working expenses of the Scheme are taken into account the Scheme pays out yearly more than it receive by way of contributions. For example, during the financial year 1960-61, the contributions amounted to Rs. 7,985,189, while the expenditure on pensions, allowances, refunds and working expenses amounted to Rs. 12,408,543.

The article also stated that the W. & O. P. pensions paid are very small and that there were considerable delays in these awards. The basic pension depends on the length of pensionable service, rates of salary, &c., of the contributor and where the length of pensionable service is very short and the rate of salary very low the pension of the widow must necessarily be very small. However, the minimum inclusive pension paid to a widow now is Rs. 23 per mensem (approximately).

Delay occurs only where investigation is necessary before a pension can be determined. Such investigation may be necessitated by absence of proof of valid marriage and takes time. Wherever possible a provincial pension is paid pending completion of investigation.

As several contributors to the W. & O. P. Scheme were not aware of their W. & O. P. numbers and of their basic obligations under the W. & O. P. Ordinance a system of issuing membership cards has now been introduced. These membership cards give the W. & O. P. number of contributors and some indication of the basic obligations of contributors under the W. & O. P. Ordinance.

Probationary ASPs

THE Public Service Commission has selected the under-mentioned candidates for appointment as Probationary Assistant Superintendents of Police:—

- (i) Mr. M. M. K. Mendis
- (ii) Mr. M. Shanmugan
- (iii) Mr. H. G. Gunawardane

More for your money

THE INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION

SWEEP

210 PRIZES

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Draws held Fortnightly beginning

from 14th February, 1963

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