

(d) whether Government would be introducing some shock absorbers ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM RAJU) : (a) No proposal regarding dismantling of MSP is at present under consideration of the Government.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of reply to (a) above.

Procurement of Foodgrains

†190. SHRI MOTILAL VORA : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards a news-item captioned, "Gehoon Ki Sarkari Kharid Band Hone Se Kisan Pareshan", published in the Navbharat Times dated the 20th May, 2002;

(b) if so, the parts of the country from where official procurement of wheat is reported to have been stopped;

(c) whether Government are aware of non-procurement of paddy in West Bengal;

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(e) the concrete arrangements made by Government to avoid such difficulties to the farmers in future ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM RAJU) : (a) Yes, Sir.

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(b) Procurement of wheat coincides with the period of market arrivals, i.e. from 1st April to 30th May, 2002. In line with this, procurement of wheat by public procuring agencies was brought to a close in all the wheat procuring States from 31-5-2002, except in Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The procurement period was extended on the requests of the State Governments of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar upto 15-6-2002, 30-6-2002 and 15-7-2002 respectively.

(c) to (e) The Government of West Bengal has been procuring rice through the levy route under Decentralized Procurement Scheme. However, in order to safeguard the interest of farmers and to ensure that farmers get Minimum Support Price for their produce, Government of West Bengal has recently decided to procure paddy and rice by also involving the co-operative sector.

Implementation of consolidated food law

191. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are thinking of proposing a consolidated food law to be implemented by one Ministry instead of the present eight;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and how this new law is going to be implemented; and

(c) whether the said law would be able to ensure that mounting storage of foodgrains does not occur and timely distribution plans are formulated ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI U. V. KRISHNAM RAJU) : (a) to (c) A Group of Ministers (GOM) has been constituted to propose legislation and other changes for preparing a modern Integrated Food Law and related regulations. Action has already been initiated in formulating such proposals. As these are only in a preliminary stage, details are yet to be worked out.