

Utilization of excess foodgrains

495. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that excess procured foodgrains are rotting in various FCI godowns;

(b) if so, the excess quantity in these godowns;

(c) what steps are being taken to distribute such stocks to the Below Poverty Line people; and

(d) whether Government are contemplating any policy to utilise these excess foodgrains for distribution or export?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN):
(a) No, Sir.

(b) The comparative position of stocks of wheat and rice held in Central Pool as on 1.10.2001 as against the minimum buffer norms is as follows:

(in lakh tonnes)

Commodity	Stocks held on 1.10.2001	Minimum Buffer
Wheat	368.2,,	116.00
Rice	214.52	65.00
Total	582.71	181.00

(c) The Government has increased the Below Poverty Line quota of foodgrains from 20 kgs to 25 kgs per month per family.

(d) The following steps have been taken by the Government to liquidate the excess foodgrains stocks:

(i) The allocation of foodgrains for BPL families was increased from 10Kg to 20 Kg per family per month from April 1,2000. The allocation of foodgrains for BPL families has been further raised to 25 Kg. per family per month from July, 2001.

(ii) The Government has decided to reduce Central Issue Price (CIP) of wheat and rice for APL population with effect from July, 2001.

The CIP of wheat, which was Rs. 830 per quintal, has been reduced to Rs. 610 per quintal and CIP of rice, which was at Rs. 1130 per quintal, has been reduced to Rs. 830 per quintal.

- (iii) foodgrains are made available at BPL rates for allotment to State Governments @ 5 kg per head per month for covering categories of indigent people living in welfare institutions, such as, beggar homes, backward students/Nari Niketans, etc. sponsored by the State Governments and concerned administrative Ministry of the Government of India.
- (iv) Foodgrains at CIP applicable for BPL families are being allocated for all the welfare schemes including SC/ST/OBC Hostels scheme, implemented by the various Ministries of the Government of India,
- (v) Foodgrains can be allocated at BPL rates for development schemes (where the beneficiaries belong to BPL category) implemented by NGOs sponsored by the State Governments endorsed by the administrative Ministry in the Government of India, as also by International organisations like World Food Programme,
- (vi) Since January 2001, Government has been allotting foodgrains, free of cost, to States affected by drought for undertaking Food for Work programmes. Similar assistance has also been extended to flood affected States. One lakh tonnes of foodgrains were also allotted to Gujarat in January 2001 for distribution in the earthquake areas,
- (vii) Foodgrains at CIP applicable for BPL families can be allotted to the State Governments for undertaking "Food-for-Work" programmes in the States, as also for the "Greening India Campaign",
- (viii) The Government has also decided to give additional allocation of foodgrains at BPL rates to the drought affected States for distribution to all the drought affected families (BPL & APL) @ 20 kg per family per month for a period of three months in the current financial year,
- (ix) FCI has been permitted to offer wheat and rice from the Central Pool for the purpose of export at a price not lower than CIP for BPL category.