

Supply of foodgrains for students in SC/ST hostels

767. SHRI R.C. SINGH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government supplies foodgrains for students who are studying in SC/ST/OBC hostels in the country;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that the foodgrains are being provided to students studying only in the States of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka since 2001-02; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (c) The Government allocates foodgrains to States/UTs under SC/ST/OBC Hostels Scheme for such students staying in hostels based on requests received from State/UT Governments. Allocations of foodgrains under this scheme were made in 2001-02 to 19 States/UTs including Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. In subsequent years, allocations were issued mainly to Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka under this scheme based on request received. During 2008-09, foodgrains under the scheme have been allocated to Andhra Pradesh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Nagaland and Tripura.

Rise in the prices of foodgrains

†768.SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the prices of foodgrains are increasing continuously;

(b) whether the production of wheat and rice has also increased; and

(c) the measures being adopted to control the prices of pulses as well as other foodgrains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) No, Madam, There has been no continuous increase in prices of food grains especially Rice and Wheat. Government has taken several steps to check the increase in prices by taking effective measures such as augmenting domestic supplies of foodgrains through imports at zero/reduced rates of duty and ban on exports. Prices of foodgrains are either stable or declined. Across the 4 zones, the Retail prices and whole sale prices of Rice and wheat is more or less stable over the last six months.

(b) Yes, Madam, Since 2004-05 there has been increase in production of rice from 83.13 million tonnes to 96.69 million tonnes in 2007-08. The Third Advance Estimates of production sets rice production for 2008-09 at 99.37 million tonnes. The production of wheat has also increased from 68.64 million tonnes in 2004-05 to 78.57 million tonnes in 2007-08. The Third Advance Estimates sets wheat production for 2008-09 at 77.63 million tonnes.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi