

(d) if not, the facts thereof and whether as a result of provision of by-production, these sugar mills also get assistance in offsetting general economic loss; and

(e) if so, Government's reaction in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) As per the information available with the Government, there are 626 sugar factories in the country as on 30.06.2009.

(c) As on 31.03.2009, 136 sugar factories have bagasse based co-generation power plants.

(d) and (e) Utilization of their by-product viz. bagasse for cogeneration of power is an economic activity involving value addition which improves the viability and profitability of sugar mills. This adds to green power availability in the country and helps in meeting the overall power requirement. The green power so generated has the potential of giving carbon credits to the sugar factories and to the country as a whole, further improving revenue generation. Therefore, the Government would continue to support bagasse based co-generation projects.

Procurement of wheat and rice

*117. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRITYA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether wheat/rice procurement has gone up and procurement is on the higher side and shortfall is expected in wheat, oil seeds, sugarcane and pulses;

(b) if so, to what extent there is a decline in foodgrain, especially in wheat; and

(c) what is the total procurement made so far and to what extent it has been helpful to the country to make it sufficient in regard to food products?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) There has been a record procurement of 250.44 lakh tonnes of wheat (as on 6.7.2009) in Rabi Marketing Season (RMS) 2009-10, as against total procurement of 226.89 lakh tonnes in RMS 2008-09 and there is no shortfall in wheat procurement. Similarly, a record procurement of 312.66 lakh tonnes of rice (as on 6.7.2009) has been achieved in Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) 2008-09 as against 284.93 lakh tonnes in the entire KMS 2007-08. The procurement of oilseeds and pulses under Price Support Scheme have shown a decreasing trend during past three years. Sugarcane is not procured under Price Support Scheme.

(c) Adequate stocks of foodgrains (wheat & rice) are available in the Central Pool to meet the requirements of TPDS and other welfare schemes and also to maintain required buffer stocks for ensuring food security.