

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| Other including Technical Education, Open and Distance Learning etc. | | 35,215 | 4,067 | 4,116 | 5,181 |
| TOTAL: | | 84,943 | 6,483 | 7,600 | 9,600 |

(c) and (d) The public expenditure on education in the country has increased from Rs. 19,616 crore in 1990-91 to Rs. 1,86,498 crore (Budget Estimate) in 2008-09.

Import of wheat

*306. SHRI NAND KISHORE YADAV: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether this Ministry has decided to extend the time limit for import of wheat from foreign countries in spite of the fact that bumper crop is expected this year and Central pool is full of wheat stocks;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether due to this decision, prices of wheat in the domestic market have declined by 2 per cent recently; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) There has been no import of wheat during 2008-09 and 2009-10 for Central Pool Stocks. However, import of wheat at zero duty is allowed in the country since 9th September, 2006.

(b) In order to contain the domestic prices and to increase the availability of wheat in the country Government had decided to allow import of wheat at zero duty.

(c) and (d) Arrivals of new Rabi crop have commenced. What prices tend to decline on fresh crop arrivals. Price of wheat in domestic market have come down by about 3.1% between 16th March and 13th April, 2010.

Supply of foodgrains to BPL families

†*307. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering any Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) like proposal under which grains would be provided to BPL families at a very low rate to satisfy hunger;

(b) if so, the outlines of the proposed scheme; and

(c) the number of families living below the poverty line?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) Government proposes to enact a National Food Security Act entitling by law each Below Poverty Line (BPL) family to a certain quantity of foodgrains each month at subsidized prices. The Department of Food and Public Distribution (DFPD) has circulated a Concept Note on 05.06.2009 and 10.06.2009 on the proposed National Food Security Act to all State/Union Territory (UT) Governments and concerned Central Ministries and examined the responses received. The Department has also held consultations with the State Food Secretaries, representatives of various Central Ministries, Planning Commission, experts and other stakeholders. A draft National Food Security Bill is under preparation in consultation with the Ministry of Law and Justice. After Finalization, it is proposed to place the draft Bill on the website of the DFPD for public scrutiny and comments.

Planning Commission is the nodal agency of the Government of India for estimating poverty at national and State levels. For allocation of foodgrains to State and Union Territories (UTs) under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), the Department of Food and Public Distribution is currently using the number of BPL families based on 1993-94 poverty estimates of the Planning Commission and the population estimates of the Registrar-General of India as on 1st March, 2000. As per these estimates, the number of BPL families is 6.52 crore, which includes 2.43 crore Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families.

Sale of sub-standard fertilizers, pesticides, etc.

*308. SHRI G.N. RATANPURI: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the sale and distribution of sub-standard fertilizers pesticides, weedicides and fungicides;

(b) the action taken against the persons/business houses accused of sale and distribution of sub-standard agricultural inputs;

(c) the quantum of such sub-standard agricultural inputs and the degree of damage caused by their use; and

(d) whether the relevant provisions of law are adequate and effective enough to curb this menace or any amendments in the law are contemplated.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SRIKANT JENA): (a), (b) and (d) To ensure adequate availability of right quality of fertilizers to the farmers at reasonable prices, the Government of India has declared fertilizer as an essential commodity under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and notified Fertilizer Control Order, 1985. Under the order the Government of India regulates the trade, price and distribution of fertilizers in the country.