

(b) Previously extensions were given as under :

S.No.	Extension given From	Extension given Upto
(i)	After expiry from date beyond 20.05.2002	27.04.2005
(ii)	27.04.2005	27.04.2007
(iii)	27.04.2007	27.07.2007
(iv)	27.07.2007	27.10.2007
(v)	27.10.2007	27.10.2009
(vi)	27.10.2009	27.10.2010

(c) Extension has now been given upto 27.10.2011.

(d) No, Sir.

Essential Commodities Act

†*156.SHRI NARESH CHANDRA AGRAWAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) when was the Essential Commodities (EC) Act implemented in the country and what were the circumstances at the time of implementation which necessitated enactment of this law;

(b) whether it is a fact that those circumstances are not prevailing at present and as a result traders are opposing this black law;

(c) if so, whether Government will consider to roll back this law; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) At the time of Independence, certain powers to regulate essential commodities were available with the Government of India. The rules were given the form of an Act in 1946 by the Essential Supplies (Temporary Powers) Act. In 1955, the above Act was adopted and suitably modified and became the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. The Act provides for control of production, supply and distribution of, and trade & commerce in certain commodities in the public interest.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) The Essential Commodities Act is required even today for control of certain aspects of the notified essential commodities. There have been no specific representations from traders opposing this law or requesting for roll back of this Act.

(c) and (d) The government does not propose to roll back this law. This is because the Act is required to regulate the supply of certain essential commodities.

Production of Kharif crops

*157. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether production of kharif crops for 2009-10 is estimated at 98.83 million tonnes which is lower than the target of 125.15 million tonnes set for the year;

(b) if so, the appropriate measures Government is taking to meet this situation; and

(c) whether the area coverage under total foodgrains during kharif 2009-10 compared to that during *kharif* 2008-09 shows a decline of 46.18 lakh hectare (ha)?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) The production of kharif foodgrains for the year 2009-10 (4th Advance Estimates) is estimated at 103.84 million tonnes as against the target of 125.15 million tonnes. The production was affected in Kharif 2009-10 due to severe drought in 2009. For increasing productivity and production of foodgrains in the country, various Crop Development Schemes and Programmes, namely; National Food Security Mission (NFSM), Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Maize and Oilpalm (ISOPOM), Integrated Cereals Development Programme for Rice/Wheat/Coarse Cereals under Macro Management of Agriculture and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) are being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture through State Governments. In addition to above schemes, during the current year, i.e., 2010-11, two new programmes for bringing Green Revolution to Eastern Indian and Integrated Development of 60000 Pulses and Oilseeds Villages in rainfed areas have been initiated under RKVY. National Food Security Mission has been strengthened from 1.4.2010 with the merger of pulses component of ISOPOM and inclusion of two new potential States namely; Assam and Jharkhand for pulses production. A new programme "Accelerated Pulses Production Programme (A3P)" in the form of