

Procurement of Bajra by government

1139. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has decided to procure bumper crop of bajra at Rs.880 per quintal to avoid distress sale by farmers in Rajasthan;

(b) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government to procure bajra from farmers;

(c) whether it is a fact that State Government of Rajasthan and FCI are unable to store this bumper crop in their godowns/werehouses; and

(d) if so, Government's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Coarsegrains are procured by State Governments, wherever necessary, to ensure payment of the declared Minimum Support Price (MSP) to the farmers. On a request of Govt. of Rajasthan for assistance in procuring bajra, Food Corporation of India (FCI) has been directed to undertake procurement of bajra at MSP at selected centres in Rajasthan with an understanding that FCI's share would not exceed one third of the total quantity of coarsegrains likely to be procured in the State. Remaining two thirds of the procurement is to be done by agencies of Rajasthan Government. Further, FCI has also been directed to release a rolling advance of Rs. 50 crore to the State Government for partial financing of the procurement operations of bajra.

(c) FCI has reported that it has the required storage capacity for storing procured bajra. The State Government has also not reported any shortage of godowns for this.

(d) Does not arise.

Measures to tackle hunger

1140. MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that other developing countries have done better than our country in tackling hunger;

- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps Government proposes to take in tackling the hunger?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (c) International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) has brought out a Global Hunger Index (GHI) Report in October, 2010. The index is a combined measure of undernourishment, underweight in children under the age of five and mortality rate of children under the age of five. The index ranks countries on a 100-point scale, with 0 being the best score (no hunger) and 100 being the worst. As per GHI Report, 2010, India ranks 67th among 84 countries.

There are adequate stocks of rice, wheat and coarse cereals available in the country. Government has adequate buffer stocks of food grains in central pool to ensure food security in the country. In order to prevent hunger, Government allocates foodgrains at highly subsidized prices to States and Union Territories under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) for Below Poverty Line(BPL), including Antyodaya Anna Yojana(AAY) families every month. Allocations of foodgrains for Above Poverty Line (APL) category are made at subsidized prices depending upon their availability in the Central Pool. Government is also implementing food based other welfare schemes like Mid-day-Meal(MDM) Scheme, Integrated Child Development Services Scheme (ICDS), Annapoorna Scheme, Village Grain Bank Scheme, etc.

Further, the Government proposes to enact the National Food Security Act to entitle by law every family below the poverty line to a certain quantity of subsidized foodgrains each month.

Policy to control price rise

1141. SHRI AVTAR SINGH KARIMPURI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether attention of Government has been drawn towards the unabated increase in the prices of consumable items during the last ten months;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government has framed any concrete policy to control the price-rise; and