

### **Free distribution of foodgrains to poor**

1904. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government will agree to distribute foodgrains free of cost to poor people, which at present is exposed to rain and being rotten; and
- (b) the Order of the Apex Court in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Foodgrains are being allocated at highly subsidized prices under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and other welfare schemes to ensure food security to the most vulnerable sections of the society. At present under TPDS, Government makes allocation of foodgrains to 6.52 crore Below Poverty Line families, including 2.43 crore Antyodaya Anna Yojana families @ 35 kg. per family per month. Allocation of foodgrains at subsidized rates is also made for 11.52 crore Above Poverty Line families ranging between 15 kg. and 35 kg. per family per month. Further, this Department has been making allocations for other Welfare Schemes and natural calamities among others and additional allocation of foodgrains depending upon availability of stocks and the requirement/requests received from State/UTs.

In view of reports of damages to Central Pool stocks of foodgrains in some godowns of FCI and State agencies during last monsoon season, Hon'ble Supreme Court expressed concern and suggested to Government to take some long term and short-term measures.

In view of the orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court dated 31.08.2010, in September, 2010, Government has made an *ad hoc* additional allocation of 25 lakh tonnes of wheat/rice at BPL prices for six months.

### **Rottening of foodgrains**

†1905. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether attention of Government has been drawn towards rotting of foodgrains lying outside the godowns of FCI and railway stations;
- (b) if so, the steps being taken by Government to distribute this rotting foodgrains among the poor;
- (c) whether it is a fact that foodgrains distributed among the families living below poverty line under public distribution system is also of sub-standard quality; and
- (d) the details of steps taken to ensure that good quality foodgrains is distributed among the poor under public distribution system?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) Foodgrains procured by F.C.I. and State Government Agencies are stored in covered godowns as well as in CAP (cover and plinth). The foodgrains are stored in CAP, when there is shortage of covered storage space.

468.33 tonnes of FCI wheat and rice got damaged during the last monsoon season, as reported by FCI.

(b) Only good quality foodgrains conforming to Prevention of Food Adulteration (PFA) standards are issued for distribution under Targeted Public Distribution System and other welfare schemes. No damaged/non-issuable stocks are issued for distribution.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Instructions have been issued to FCI and State agencies to take following steps to ensure supply of only good quality foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and other welfare schemes:—

- (i) Only good quality foodgrains free from insect infestation and conforming to PFA Standards are to be issued under TPDS and other welfare schemes.
- (ii) Ample opportunities are to be provided to representatives of State Governments to check quality of foodgrains prior to lifting them from FCI godowns.
- (iii) Samples of foodgrains are to be collected and sealed jointly by FCI and State Food and Civil Supplies Department representatives from the stocks of foodgrains to be issued under TPDS.
- (iv) An officer not below the rank of Inspector is to be deputed from State Government to take delivery of foodgrains stocks from FCI godowns.
- (v) Regular inspection to check quality of foodgrains is to be carried out by the officers of State Government and surprise checks are also carried out by the officers of Quality Control Cells of the Department of Food and Public Distribution, Government of India.
- (vi) State Governments have been informed that it is the responsibility of the concerned State Government/UT Administration to ensure that during transportation and storage at different stages in the distribution chain, the foodgrains retain the required quality specifications.
- (vii) The State Governments, where the decentralized procurement is in operation, have to ensure that the quality of foodgrains issued under TPDS and other welfare schemes meet the desired standards under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act.