

### **Guidelines for procurement and storage of foodgrains**

1906. SHRI THOMAS SANGMA:

SHRI P. RAJEEVE:

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

(a) whether Government has informed the Supreme Court of the steps taken regarding preservation of the foodgrains procured in the year 2010;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether in light of the Court Commissioner's report that 50,000 tonnes of wheat had damaged and several lakhs of tonnes of wheat procured were not properly preserved, Government has taken any steps to properly evaluate the capacities of the godowns and lay down stringent guidelines regarding preservation and procurement to prevent such blatant wastage of foodgrains in future; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (d) In a Writ Petition (Civil) No. 196/2001 by People Union for Civil Liberties, Government filed affidavits in the Supreme Court on 11.8.2010, 27.8.2010, 6.9.2010, 13.10.2010 and 9.11.2010 indicating, *inter-alia*, steps taken by the Government regarding proper storage and preservation of foodgrains procured for the Central Pool. The Court was informed that covered storage capacity available with Food Corporation of India (FCI) has been increased from 227 lakh tonnes to 274 lakh tonnes between July, 2008 to July, 2010 through hiring of private godowns for short term uses and that capacity utilization has gone up from 74% to 91% against an accepted norm of 75% which has further yielded an additional storage of 43.84 lakh tonnes of covered space during this period. A scheme for construction of godowns for FCI and State procurement agencies through private entrepreneurs with a guarantee of 10 years of assured hiring has also been formulated. A capacity of 150.65 lakh tonnes is to be created in the scheme for which work in some areas has already started. The Court was further informed of preventive steps being carried out for the safe storage of foodgrains including a series of guidelines issued to States/UTs and FCI from time to time which envisage quality assurance of procured stocks, code of practices for scientific storage of foodgrains and quality control during procurement and storage etc. Detailed instructions have been issued by Government to all concerned regarding steps to be taken for preservation of stocks stored in CAP/covered godowns. Further a High Level Committee headed by Secretary (Food and Public Distribution) has been constituted on 9.11.2010 to monitor creation of storage capacity and prudent management of central stocks of foodgrains.