

### **Procurement and storage of foodgrains**

†3438. SHRI JAI PRAKASH : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the steps being taken by the Food Corporation of India for developing storing capacity, so that the wastage of foodgrains can be prevented;

(b) whether Government proposes to hire the services of professionals or food management experts in this regards;

(c) if not, whether Government proposes to give procurement of foodgrains and its storage to private bodies; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS) : (a) Due to the increased procurement of foodgrains and to reduce the storage in Cover and Plinth (CAP) the Government formulated a Scheme for construction of storage godowns through private entrepreneurs, Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) and State Warehousing Corporations (SWCs). Assessment of additional storage needs under the scheme is based on the overall procurement/consumption and the storage space already available. For the consuming areas, storage capacity is to be created to meet four months requirement of PDS and other Welfare Schemes in a State. For the procurement areas, the highest stock levels in the last three years are considered to decide the storage capacity required.

Based on this analysis and criteria laid down in the scheme, State wise capacity requirement and locations were identified. Under the scheme, the Food Corporation of India would now give a guarantee of ten years for assured hiring to the private entrepreneurs. A capacity of 152.97 lakh tonnes is to be created in 19 states under the scheme through private entrepreneurs and Central and State Warehousing Corporations. Out of this, as on 31.07.2011 tenders have been finalized for creation of storage capacity of 52.32 lakh tonnes by the private entrepreneurs. CWC and SWCs are constructing 5.31 and 15.49 lakh tonnes respectively under the Scheme, out of which a capacity of about 3.5 lakh tonnes has already been completed by CWC/SWCs.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

In the 11th Five Year Plan an allocation of Rs. 154.82 crore has been made to FCI for construction of storage godowns on their own. This is likely to result in the construction of about 1.2 lakh tonnes capacity.

To tide over the problem of shortage of storage space. FCI also hires storage space from CWC/SWCs/Govt. agencies and private parties etc. Executive Directors (Zones) and General Managers (Regions) of FCI have also been given full powers for hiring of private godowns for short term usage to store the procured foodgrains as per their requirement if the capacity available with FCI is not sufficient to store the foodgrains.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) There is no proposal for engagement of private entities on behalf of Government of India for procurement of foodgrains. However for storage of foodgrains under the Guarantee Scheme of FCI the godowns constructed by private entrepreneurs will be hired by FCI/State Agency and payment of storage charges will be on a guaranteed long term basis.

#### **Consumer courts in Assam**

3439. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the consumer courts for redressal of grievances of general customers in several districts of Assam are not functioning properly and some of them are even not existing;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the criterion fixed for commissioning consumer courts as well as to appeal before the courts by a customer;

(c) the details of the number of cases being registered and disposed through consumer courts in Assam during the last three years; and

(d) the details of programmes implemented, State-wise, the steps taken and expenditure made towards generating awareness among the general customers as well as functioning the consumer courts in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS) : (a) No, Sir. As informed by National Consumer Disputes