

- (b) the details thereof;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that the country is ill-equipped to store and distribute the crop produced by our farmers; and
- (d) the details thereof alongwith the data to support the storage capacity of the nation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The production of rice in the country for the year 2010-11 as per the Fourth Advance Estimates issued by Department of Agriculture and Cooperation is 80.65 million tonnes.

(c) and (d) The Food Corporation of India has a total of 333.63 lakh MTs of storage capacity including Covered and Cover and Plinth (CAP) both owned and hired with a capacity utilization of 90% as on 15.7.2011. The state-wise details of the storage capacity available with FCI is given in the Annexure. [See Appendix 223 Annexure No. 8] Due to the increased procurement of foodgrains and shortage of covered storage space, foodgrains are also stored in CAP which is a scientific method of storage. The State Agencies also store foodgrains for the Central Pool in the storage godowns maintained by them. To tide over the problem of shortage of storage space, FCI hires storage space from CWC/SWCs/Govt. agencies and private parties etc. Executive Directors (Zones) and General Managers (Region) 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. The Government has also formulated a Scheme for construction of storage godowns through private entrepreneurs, Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) and State Warehousing Corporations (SWCs).

A capacity of about 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 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. The Government makes regular allocation of foodgrains for distribution through the Public Distribution System (PDS) and for other welfare schemes. In order to maintain supplies and securing availability and distribution of essential commodities, the PDS (Control) order 2001 mandates the State Government and Union Territory Administrations to carry out all required actions to ensure smooth functioning of the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS).

Lifting ban on import of wheat

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

(a) whether Government proposes to lift the ban on export of wheat, in view of bumper production of wheat this year, and existing shortage of storage facilities;

(b) whether Government has held consultations with wheat producers and procuring States in this connection; and

(c) the reasons why Government is delaying the decision on export of wheat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (c) No, Sir. However, Government is not averse to exports of limited quantity of wheat. But the export of agricultural products depends upon several factors such as availability of surplus, international demand and supply situation, quality standards and price competitiveness. Presently the prices of wheat in the international market are much lower compared to domestic prices of wheat because of which it is not feasible to export wheat.

Stock of wheat and rice

798. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the stock of wheat and rice in Central as well as State godowns;

(b) whether Government is not in a position to store the foodgrains because of shortage of storage capacity;

(c) whether there is a proposal to export wheat, in view of large quantities of procured grains; and

(d) if so, how it proposes to meet shortage in case of drought or failure of crop in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) The stock position of wheat and rice in Central Pool as on 1.7.2011 was 640.06 lakh tons comprising of 371.49 lakh tons of wheat and 268.57 lakh tons of rice. Details of stocks with FCI and State Government agencies as on 1.7.2011 is given in the Statement (See below). The record procurement of rice and wheat during the last three years and the current year and the consequent surplus stocks of foodgrains in the Central Pool have resulted in a storage gap. Government has formulated a scheme for construction of storage godowns through private entrepreneurs,

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.