

- (a) whether the multinational companies (MNCs) are procuring rice and wheat in the country at higher prices;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether there is any restriction on the quantity to be procured by such companies;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (f) whether Government proposes to limit the quantity of foodgrains procured by such companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (e) As per the existing procurement policy of Government of India, procurement is open ended. All quantities of wheat, rice and coarse grains conforming to FAQ specifications brought by farmers at specified procurement centres are purchased by Food Corporation of India and State Agencies concerned at Minimum Support Price. The farmers are free to sell their produce at Government procurement centres or to private agencies, whichever is advantageous to them. There is no restriction at present on procurement of wheat & rice from farmers by any organization.

- (f) No, Sir.

Alarming situation of food security

2039. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Indian food security situation continues to be alarming, according to the International Food Policy Research Institute's Global Hunger Index, 2011 which ranks the country at 67 out of 81 countries of the world with the worst food security status;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether India's Global Hunger Index for 2011 was 23.7 while our neighbouring countries China and Pakistan ranked 5.5 and 20.7 respectively and even Rawanda, Nepal and Sudan all did better than India; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to improve food security in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (d) International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) has brought out a report on Global Hunger Index (GHI) in October, 2011. In this report Index has been actually calculated for 122 countries wherein India has been ranked as 67th out of 81 countries finally included in the calculation. The Global Hunger Index (GHI) is based on three equal weight indicators which are (A) under nourishment reflected by the proportion of under nourished as a percentage of the population, (B) child under weight—reflected by the proportion of children younger than the age of five who are under weight, (C) child mortality—reflected by the mortality rate of children younger than the age of five. It is clear from the constituents of GHI that it is indicative of undernourishment and not hunger and that also specially in children under the age of five. The Index does not reflect the number of hungry or lack of availability of food or access to food to the people in the society. So it is not a proper index for reflecting the situation of Indian food security and cannot be even used to compare the same with the rest of the countries. Furthermore, the 2011 GHI report itself mentions that GHI is based on past data for the year 2004 to 2009 and data for proportion of under-nourished is as per the years 2005 to 2007. The report does not take into account what has happened between 2009 and 2011. Therefore food security situation in India cannot be evaluated on the basis of GHI ranking alone. These shortcomings or limitations of the GHI has been communicated to the IFPRI in a meeting held on 19th October, 2011 where they made a presentation on the report to all concerned departments at Krishi Bhavan in Department of Agriculture & Cooperation.

The score of India on GHI 2011 is 23.7 which was 24.1 in GHI 2010. The scores of China, Pakistan, Rawanda, Nepal and Sudan are 5.5, 20.7, 21.0, 19.9 and 21.5 respectively. But as cited above, because of the serious limitations of the GHI, and it not being related to hunger or non-availability or non access of food, it is not correct to say that the food security situation in the aforesaid countries is better than India.

The improving situation can be gauged from the fact that the procurement of wheat and rice has been constantly increasing in the last few years and has been at record level this year. The total stocks of Rice and Wheat in the Central Pool as on 1st November, 2011 is 557.54 lakh tones against buffer norms of 212.00 lakh tons. Not only more stocks have been available in the country, but these

have been distributed to needy and poor by additional allocations made for Antyodaya Anna Yojana(AAY)/Below Poverty Line(BPL)/Above Poverty Line(APL) families as under:

- 36.08 lakh tons of foodgrains in January 2010 at MSP based/derived prices for distribution to AAY/BPL/APL families for two months.
- 30.66 lakh tons of foodgrains in May 2010 for BPL/AAY/APL families @ 8.45 per kg. for wheat and Rs. 11.85 per kg for rice.
- 27.41 lakh tons of foodgrains in August 2010 to ensure a minimum of 15 kg. of foodgrains per family per month to 21 States/UTs where it was less than that quantity.
- 3.65 lakh tons of foodgrains in August, 2010 to ensure 35 kg of foodgrains per family per month in 4 North Eastern(NE) States, Sikkim and 2 hilly States where it was less than that quantity.
- 25.00 lakh tons of foodgrains for BPL families at BPL prices to all States/UTs in September 2010.
- 25.00 lakh tons of foodgrains for BPL families at BPL prices to all States/UTs in January, 2011.
- 25.00 lakh tons of foodgrains in January 2011 for APL families @ Rs.8.45 per kg for wheat and Rs. 11.85 per kg for rice.
- 50.00 lakh tons of foodgrains for BPL families at BPL prices to all States/UTs in May 2011.
- 50.00 lakh tons of foodgrains allocated on 30.06.2011 raising thereby monthly allocation of foodgrains for APL families to 15 kg. per family per month from June 2011 to March 2012 in 20 States/UTs and 35 kg per family per month in 4 NE States, Sikkim and 2 hilly States of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand where allocations was less than that quantity.
- 23.67 lakh tons of foodgrains allocated for 174 poorest/backward districts in 27 States during July to October 2011.

The improvement in Targeted Public Distribution System(TPDS) is a continuous process and recently a lot of steps have been taken by Government of India and State/UT Governments to improve the Public Distribution System as below:

- Scheme on computerization of TPDS on pilot basis approved to be implemented in 3 districts each of 4 pilot State i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh and Delhi is being implemented.
- Pilot scheme on Smart Card based delivery of TPDS commodities approved for Chandigarh UT and State of Haryana is also under implementation.
- Integrated Information System for Foodgrains Management (IISFM) aims at putting an online management system in place to give information about foodgrains management in FCI and is also being implemented.

To further ensure food security in the country, Government is proposing a National Food Security Bill to provide for food and nutritional security in human life cycle approach by ensuring access to adequate quantity of quality food at affordable prices for people to live a life with dignity. This proposed Bill will increase the coverage of TPDS upto 75% of the rural population, with atleast 46% population belonging to priority households and upto 50% of the total urban population, with atleast 28% population belonging to priority households under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS). The proposed draft Bill provides that the Central Government may, from time to time, prescribe the guidelines for identification of priority households and general households, including exclusion criteria, for the purposes of their entitlement under the Act. The Bill also contains provisions for nutritional support to pregnant women & lactating mothers and children as well as entitlements for special groups such as destitute, homeless, emergency and disaster affected persons, persons living in starvations etc.

Besides the allocation and distribution of foodgrains at highly subsidized rates to the population of Below Poverty Line(BPL) and other families under Antyodaya Anna Yojana(AAY) every month, Government also provides foodgrains to Above Poverty Line (APL) category at subsidized rates 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 (ICDS) Scheme, Annapoorna Scheme, Village Grain Banks Scheme, etc. India has adequate buffer stocks of food grains in Central Pool for allocations under the aforesaid schemes/programmes and also has a sound public distribution system. Hence, the position of the Country shown in the Global Hunger Index is not at all justified.

Allocation of foodgrains for APL families

2040. DR. K.V.P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state: