

(NFSB). 341.97 lakh tonnes of rice and 281.44 lakh tonnes of wheat has been procured from 2010-11 crop, aggregating to 623.41 lakh tonnes.

(c) The following steps have been taken to speed up the procurement process:

- (i) States are encouraged to adopt Decentralised Procurement (DCP) system to maximize procurement and to ensure better reach of MSP to farmers. So far 5 States have adopted DCP system for wheat and 9 States/UTs have adopted DCP system for rice.
- (ii) Interactions are held with State Food Secretaries from time to time to monitor procurement operations and to speed up the procurement process.
- (iii) Instructions have been issued to open procurement centres at the locations convenient to farmers.
- (iv) In order to extend the reach of Minimum Support Price (MSP) operations to marginal/small farmers, commission at the rate of 2.5% of MSP in respect of paddy and 2% of MSP in respect of wheat has been allowed to Cooperative Societies/Self Help Groups.

Export of sugar

2051. SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has allowed export of sugar although there is less availability of sugar in the domestic market;
- (b) if so, whether it would not affect the prices of sugar in domestic market; and
- (c) the details thereof and the reason for allowing export of sugar in the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) Taking into account the opening stock and likely sugar production, the Government has allowed export of upto 10 lakh tons of sugar during sugar season 2011-12 under Open General Licence.

(b) The prices of sugar in the domestic market are influenced by various factors like raw material costs, production, supply, demand, international prices and market sentiments. As such it would not be possible to indicate the impact of one factor on domestic prices.

(c) The Government has allowed export of sugar to ensure liquidity for sugar mills and timely payment of cane price to sugarcane farmers after considering requirement for domestic market.

Import of pulses

2052. SHRI NATUJI HALAJI THAKOR:

SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL:

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

(a) whether, despite proper harvest during the current year, Government is planning to import pulses putting an additional financial burden of Rs. 400 crores on the exchequer;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the duration for which the said import is likely to continue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Government has permitted import of pulses at zero duty under Open General Licence (OGL). Government does not import pulses. However, a scheme is in place since November 2008 for supplying imported pulses to the State Governments for distribution under PDS @1 kg. per family per month. The aim of the scheme is to ensure the availability of pulses at subsidised rates to the vulnerable sections of the population. Under the Scheme, the Central Government reimburses subsidy @Rs.10 per kg. on the quantity of imported pulses supplied to the State Governments. Five designated agencies, viz., PEC, STC, MMTC, NAFED and NCCF, import pulses and supply to the State Governments. These agencies have been permitted to import 5 lakh tonnes of pulses in 2011-12. During April-November 2011, the designated agencies have entered into import contracts of approximately 1.65 lakh tonnes of pulses as compared to approximately 3.4 lakh tonnes during the same period last year.