THE MINISTER OF STAE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government is not considering to ban futures trading in any agricultural commodity, as futures trading is a mechanism for price discovery and price risk management. However, to curb excessive speculation in futures trading of agricutural commodites the Forward Markets Commission has taken several steps such as imposition of special margins, reduction of open position limits, increase in initial margins, disallowing of fresh positions in some contracts etc.

Water Resources in Kerala

*432. SHRI K.N. BALAGOPAL : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government has studied the annual water availability and the need of Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Kerala has been assessed as a State with excess water resources than its need; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL) : (a) and (b) As per information available, the average annual yield of rivers in Kerala is 70.323 Billion Cubic Metre (BCM). Besides, the annual replenishable ground water resources of Kerala have been assessed as 6.62 BCM. The National Commission for Integrated Water Resources Development in its report in 1999 had assessed the total water requirement for the State of Kerala for various uses as 30.9 BCM for the year 2050.

(c) and (d) The Kerala State Water Policy (2008) states that there is a mistaken notion that water is abundant in the State. Though the State receives an average annual rainfall of 3,000 mm, the undulating topography of the State coupled with deforestation and sand mining in the rivers lead to an accelerated draining of water to the sea.

National Judicial Commission

*433. PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ : Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the appointment of a National Judicial Commission has remained on the anvil for a very long time;

(b) whether the non-existence of the Commission has stalled the reforms in the process of selection of judges; and

(c) if answers to parts (a) and (b) above be in the affirmative, the time-frame within which the Ministry would make a comprehensive legislative proposal on this issue?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED) : (a) to (c) The proposal for setting up of National Judicial Commission has been on the anvil since 1990. But despite the recommendations of various Commissions including the 2nd Administrative Reforms Commission, the proposal has not reached a logical conclusion. The Constitution (Amendment) Bills moved in 1990 as well as 2003 lapsed on both the occasions due to dissolution of the House.

Currently, appointment of Judges to High Courts and Supreme Court is based on Memorandum of Procedure for appointment of Judges of Supreme Court and High Courts prepared in 1998. Representations have been made by various agencies and expert bodies to review/change the present procedure of appointment of judges. It is generally felt that this Procedure is not balanced and is one sided. It has at times been criticised also for lack of transparency and accountability. But there is no proposal made to change the existing system yet.

Construction of Modern Silos

*434. SHRI KANWAR DEEP SINGH : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether to augment capacity for storing foodgrains for the Public Distribution System (PDS), the Food Corporation of India has recently notified ten sites across the country for construction of modern silos;

(b) if so, the details of locations identified for construction of modern silos and the expenditure to be incurred on the construction of each silo;

(c) by when the task of construction of silos would be completed and the silos would start operating; and

(d) how the farmers in the country would be provided information about silos to sell their produce directly there?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS) : (a) to (c) The Government has approved creation of storage capacity of two million tonne thrugh construction of silos, within the overall storage requirements of FCI. The FCI will be the nodal agency for construction of silos through Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode. The FCI has decided the State wise distribution of capacity to be constructed in silos as under :-