

through private entrepreneurs, Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) and State Warehousing Corporations (SWCs). Under the scheme, a capacity of about 151 lakh tonnes is to be created in 19 states. Out of this tenders have been finalized for creation of storage capacity of about 89 lakh tonnes as on 15-02-2012 by the private entrepreneurs. CWC and SWCs are constructing 5.4 and 14.75 lakh tonnes respectively, out of which a capacity of about 5 lakh tonnes has already been completed by CWC/SWCs. The Government has also finalised a plan for construction of an additional total storage capacity of 5.4 lakh tonnes in the North Eastern States. Further to keep any surplus foodgrains procured safe, and to meet any increased storage requirements, Executive Directors (Zones) and General Managers (Regions) of FCI have been given full powers for hiring of godowns for short term usage, if the capacity available with FCI is not sufficient to store the foodgrains.

Procurement of wheat and rice from commission agents

1284. SHRI K.E. ISMAIL:

SHRI R.C. SINGH:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Government agencies for food procurement like FCI etc. are procuring wheat and rice from commission agents and not directly from farmers in various North Indian States;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that these agents also play money lenders' role in the beginning of harvest season and thus exploit the farmers both ways;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Government is actively considering to take steps against those unscrupulous commission agents and make purchases directly from the farmers; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Food Corporation of India (FCI) and State Government agencies are procuring wheat and paddy directly from the farmers in various North Indian States. However, in Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan, as per the mandatory provisions of the respective Agricultural Produce Marketing Acts of these States, wheat and paddy is purchased through commission agents, at specified Procurement Centres.

(c) and (d) No such reports have been received by the Government. However, it is for the State Governments concerned to regulate money lending within the State.

(e) and (f) Purchases are made by Government Procurement agencies through commission agents in the States of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan in accordance with the mandatory provisions of the respective Agricultural Produce Marketing Acts of these States.

Setting up of silos

1285. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has decided to engage private sector to set up silos of a total capacity of 2 million tonnes to augment grain storage with Planning Commission's assistance;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has sought global assistance to build the state-of-the-art silos and entered build-own-operate (BOO) model with private firms; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) The Government has decided to create a storage capacity of two million tonne through construction of silos. This capacity will be part of the overall storage capacity requirements of Food Corporation of India (FCI). The silos will be constructed under the Private Public Partnership (PPP) mode for which FCI will be the nodal agency. At locations identified for construction of storage capacity by the FCI, if land is made available within three months by FCI, Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC), State Warehousing Corporation (SWC), State Government or Central Government/State Government Agency, the Viability Gap Funding (VGF) route may be followed. If land is not made available, the silos will be constructed under the PPP mode through FCI without VGF. The concession period will be for 20 years, which may be extended by 10 years.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise

Decline in procurement of foodgrains

1286. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a decline in procurement of foodgrains by Government agencies during the last three years;

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

(c) the steps taken to increase procurement and their safe storage;

(d) whether there is any linkage between procurement, allocation and off-take of foodgrains; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?