

2009, *inter alia*, announced that a new Act—the National Food Security Act—will be enacted to provide a statutory basis for a framework which assures food security for all and entitle by law, every BPL family to 25 kg per month of rice or wheat @ Rs. 3/ kg. In pursuance of this announcement, a draft National Food Security Bill was prepared, which was considered and approved by the Cabinet in its meeting held on 18.12.2011, for introduction in Parliament. The Government has introduced the National Food Security Bill, 2011 (NFSB) in the Lok Sabha on 22.12.2011. The Bill is presently under examination of the Department related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution.

Channelizing of PDS wheat back to procurement

355. DR. CHANDAN MITRA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether certain instances of channelizing of PDS wheat back to wheat procurement for Central Pool has been reported from different States due to huge difference between the prices of grains sold through two mechanisms;

(b) if so, the details of such incidents reported during the current year, Statewise; and

(c) the remedial steps taken by Government in the matter, in order to check huge losses to the exchequer?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Complaints have been received from Madhya Pradesh regarding channelizing of PDS wheat back to wheat procurement for Central Pool during Rabi Marketing Season (RMS) 2012-13. Food Corporation of India (FCI) and State Government have been asked to conduct an enquiry in this regard.

(c) Instructions have been issued to State Governments and FCI to purchase only those foodgrains conforming to Fair and Average Quality (FAQ) norms fixed for every year and after proper quality checks. If instances of violation of norms in procurement of foodgrains are reported which could be visible in case recycled wheat of previous years are used then due inquiry is conducted and necessary actions is taken against those found guilty.

Coverage of PDS

356. SHRI P. BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of families below poverty line covered under PDS as on 31st December, 2011;