

- (iii) Adequate dunnage materials such as wooden crates, bamboo mats, polythene sheets are to be used to check migration of moisture from the floor.
- (iv) Fumigation covers, nylon ropes, nets and insecticides for control of stored grain insect pests are to be provided in all the godowns.
- (v) Prophylactic (spraying of insecticides) and curative treatments (fumigation) are to be carried out regularly and timely in godowns for the control of stored grain insect pests.
- (vi) Effective rat control measures, both in covered godowns as well as in CAP storage are to be used.
- (vii) Foodgrains in 'Cover and Plinth' (CAP) storage are to be stored on elevated plinths and wooden crates are to be used as dunnage material. Stacks are to be properly covered with specifically fabricated low-density black polythene water -proof covers and tied with nylon ropes/nets.
- (viii) Regular periodic inspections of the stocks/godowns are to be undertaken by qualified and trained staff including senior officers.
- (ix) The principle of "First in First Out" (FIFO) is to be followed to the extent possible so as to avoid longer storage of foodgrains in godowns.
- (x) Only covered rail wagons are to be used for movement of foodgrains so as to avoid damage during transit.

Paddy procurement centres in Assam

1589. SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Food Corporation of India had set up only 13 paddy procurement centres in Assam and planning only seven more in the future;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the State has 27 districts and most of the population of the State is dependent on agriculture and paddy being the prime source; and

(c) the details of steps the Ministry has taken to protect the interest of paddy farmers in terms of price fixation and procurement of paddy from them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) During Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) 2011 -12, Food Corporation of India (FCI) opened 13 procurement centres initially, which was subsequently increased to 21. For KMS 2012-13, 14 procurement centres are proposed to be opened.

(b) Yes Sir.

(c) Steps taken by the Government to protect the interests of the farmers in terms of price fixation and procurement of paddy are given in the Statement.

Statement

Steps Taken by the Government to protect the interest of paddy farmers in Assam.

The Minimum Support Price (MSP) announced by the Government is applicable in all States, including Assam. To increase procurement of foodgrains in Assam, the State Government has been repeatedly requested to adopt the Decentralised Procurement (DCP) System. The Government introduced the DCP System in 1997-98 with a view to enhance efficiency in procurement and to encourage local procurement to the maximum extent, thereby extending the benefits of MSP to local farmers. The State Government has also been requested to take the following steps to increase procurement:

- (i) A dedicated procurement agency may be set up by the State Government to strengthen procurement infrastructure in the state.
- (ii) Provision for funds to undertake procurement operations either through their own budget or through borrowings from Reserve Bank of India or consortium of Banks.
- (iii) Steps may be taken for timely payment of MSP to farmers either through account payee cheques or through direct bank transfer to farmer's account.
- (iv) Milling capacity may be increased to enable milling of paddy procured within the state.
- (v) Storage capacities may be enhanced particularly for intermediate storage of foodgrains.