

- (b) if so, the reasons therefor and whether consumers would not be badly affected from its far-reaching effects;
- (c) the rate at which Government procures sugar for ration shops, at present;
- (d) whether the problems caused to consumers, due to decontrolling of open market prices of sugar, have been identified; and
- (e) 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), (d) and (e) The Central Government is considering the recommendations of Dr. C. Rangarajan committee which was constituted to comprehensively look into all the issues related to deregulation of the sugar sector. The Government shall keep in view the interests of all stakeholders including consumers while taking decision on its recommendations.

(c) The sugar mills are obliged to supply 10% of their production for distribution in the Public Distribution System (PDS) at ex-factory levy price, fixed on zonal basis under provisions of Essential Commodities Act, 1955. For the sugar season 2011-12, the ex-factory levy sugar price on zonal basis ranges from Rs. 1802.24 to Rs. 2117.51 per quintal.

Stock piling of foodgrains

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that foodgrains/stocks keep piling up while hunger and malnutrition continue to haunt a quarter of the country's population;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that India was ranked 65th in a list of 79 countries where serious hunger and malnutrition persists, according to International Food Policy Research Institute;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the steps taken to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS) : (a) to (d) According to 2012 report of Global Hunger Index (GHI), published by International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), India's rank was calculated as 65 out of 120 countries. The

Global Hunger Index (GHI) is based on three equal weight indicators namely (i) Under nourishment: the proportion of under nourished people as a percentage of population, (ii) Child underweight: reflected by the proportion of the children under age of five who are under weight, (iii) Child mortality: reflected by the mortality rate of children under the age of five. It is clear from the components of GHI that it is indicative of under nourishment and not hunger and that also specially in children under the age of five. The index does not reflect the number of hungry or lack of availability of food or access to food to the people in the country. As such, it is not a proper index for reflecting the situation of Indian food security and cannot be even used to compare the same with rest of the countries. Furthermore, the findings in the study are neither test checked nor validated by any large scale primary field surveys in the country.

To address the issue, the Government has been providing foodgrains at highly subsidized prices to the targeted population through State Governments/Union Territory Administrations under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and Other Welfare Schemes (OWS) such as Mid-Day Meal Scheme, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme, Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls, Annapurna, Emergency Feeding Programme, etc. During 2012-13, taking into consideration the foodgrains available in the Central Pool, the Government has so far allocated a quantity of 578.41 lakh tonnes of food grains to States/UTs under TPDS. This includes additional allocation of 50 lakh tonnes of foodgrains made for the BPL families at BPL issue prices and 21.21 lakh tonnes of additional allocation for distribution in the poorest districts as per order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court and 7.77 lakh tonnes of food grains allocated for the calamity relief, festivals etc. In addition, 49.26 lakh tonnes of foodgrains have also been allocated to States/UTs under Other Welfare Schemes.

In addition, the Government is also implementing several schemes/programmes through State Governments/UT Administrations like National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojna (IGMSY) and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). All these schemes/programmes have potential to address one or other aspect of Nutrition.

Damage to crops and stored foodgrains

670. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether recent unseasonal rains damaged the crops and stored foodgrains in the country and if so, the details of losses as a whole and Jharkhand in particular;