

- (b) the total number of goods wagons actually required for transporting coal;
- (c) whether there is any proposal to increase the production of goods wagons for transporting coal; and
- (d) whether there is any proposal to keep goods wagons exclusively for transportation of coal in order to ensure that the transportation of coal is not delayed to its destinations due to shortage of goods wagons?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) Transportation of coal is predominantly done in BOXN and BOBR type of open wagons. As on 30th November, 2015, around 1.07 lakh BOXN wagons and 0.15 lakh BOBR wagons were available with Indian Railways.

(b) The availability of wagons for loading and transportation of coal has been adequate for meeting the current demand.

(c) Wagon production is planned yearly by Indian Railways on the basis of the expected demand for transportation of commodities. During 2015-16, production of 8073 number of BOXN wagons and 490 number of BOBR wagons is targeted.

(d) General purpose wagons like BOXN wagons are utilized for transportation of bulk commodities like minerals and ores, including coal. The prevalent arrangement in which general purpose wagons are not being reserved for transportation of any particular commodity has worked satisfactorily over the years. Given the critical importance of coal in the national economy, this traffic segment is normally accorded a relatively higher priority in supply of rakes over other bulk commodities. Further, BOBR wagons are generally dedicated for loading and transportation of coal traffic only.

#### **Encouraging contract farming of cotton by CCIL**

\*140. SHRI AVINASH PANDE: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the measures being taken by Government to promote the procurement of cotton from farmers by the Cotton Corporation of India Ltd. (CCIL) at the Minimum Support Price (MSP);

(b) whether by encouraging contract farming of cotton by CCIL, cotton farmer receive remuneration that is equal to or in excess of the MSP fixed by Government; and

(c) if so, whether Government is taking any measures to promote contract farming of cotton and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) has been entrusted with procurement of cotton from farmers at Minimum Support Price (MSP). During last cotton season, CCI along with its sub-agent Maharashtra State Cooperative Cotton Growers Marketing Federation Ltd. (MSCCGMFL) procured 92.6 lakh bales at MSP for the benefit of farmers. Similar action has been initiated for MSP operations for cotton (kapas) in this cotton season, giving attention to the following :-

- (i) Purchase centres are operating on five days a week basis.
  - (ii) Payment to farmers is being made through Real-time Gross Settlement Systems (RTGS) to the extent possible.
  - (iii) Lint cotton and cotton seeds are being sold through e-Auction.
  - (iv) Awareness campaign has been taken up in a big way including display of Minimum Support Price (MSP) rate and quality parameters in local languages.
  - (v) Moisture content in cotton purchase is being dealt with as per guidelines (12% as the maximum).
  - (vi) Facilities have been developed for online grievance redressal.
  - (vii) MSP procurement is being monitored closely on a continuous basis at the highest level.
- (b) and (c) Presently, CCI is not engaged in contract farming.

#### **Drought affected areas in Maharashtra**

\*141. SHRI HUSAIN DALWAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) the parameters for declaring an area as drought affected;
- (b) the areas declared as drought affected in each of the years 2013, 2014 and 2015 in Maharashtra;
- (c) the amount of compensation declared to be paid to farmers in the drought affected areas of the State in each of the above years; and
- (d) the amount of compensation actually paid to the farmers of the State in each of the said years?