

(a) whether Food Corporation of India (FCI) has any procurement mechanism for pulses, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(b) the fresh steps taken by Government for strengthening marketing arrangements for pulses to encourage farmers to shift more acreage towards pulses?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) Yes, Sir. As decided by the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare (DAC&FW), Food Corporation of India (FCI) is procuring pulses at market price under Price Stabilisation Fund (PSF) operation during Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) 2015-16 for maintaining their buffer stock. The DAC&FW has released ₹ 50 Crores for such procurement. It has also been decided that if market prices of pulses fall below the Minimum Support Price (MSP), FCI shall procure pulses at MSP from the farmers under the Price Support Scheme of the DAC&FW.

(b) Government has decided to engage FCI as an additional Central Nodal Agency for procurement of pulses in the country along with National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation (NAFED) and Small Farmers Agri-business Consortium (SFAC), which will help farmers to have ample opportunity of deriving the best price for their produce.

Monitoring of price-rise

2336. DR. T. N. SEEMA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government agrees that the food miles, that is the distance covered from field to stomach, is large and day-by-day expanding which is thereby increasing the prices of vegetables and fruits;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto and the steps taken or to be taken in this regard;

(c) whether Government proposes to set up any regulatory/monitoring agency to monitor and regulate the demand and supply of vegetables and fruits to keep their prices under control, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the time by which such monitoring agency is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b) Increase in prices of essential commodities including vegetables and fruits is due to several factors like reduced production due

to adverse weather conditions, rise in transportation costs, supply constraints and artificial shortages due to hoarding and black marketing.

For steps taken by the Government to contain the price rise of essential food items are refer to the Statement appended to the answer to USQ 2319, Part (b) and (c).

(c) and (d) No Madam. No such proposal is under consideration.

Shortage of edible oils

2337. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether current high market price of edible oils, particularly mustard oil, is due to its shortage; and

(b) whether this shortage is manipulated, if so, the corrective measures taken to meet the situation?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAMVILAS PASWAN): (a) The less and untimely rain has affected production of mustard seed thereby low production of mustard oil which caused rise in its market price.

(b) No, Sir.

Non-supply of ration on time

†2338. SHRI RAMNATH THAKUR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that people living below poverty line do not get monthly ration of food on time, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the reasons for their not getting food ration on time; and

(c) whether Government has any plans to open new shops if people get their food ration late due to shortage of Public Distribution System shops and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAMVILAS PASWAN): (a) to (c) Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State/UT Governments. Central Government is responsible for procurement, allocation and transportation of

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.