

In addition, feasibility studies of high speed corridors have been awarded to various railway companies and consultants are as under:

Sl. No.	High Speed Corridor	Consultants undertaking feasibility study
1.	Delhi-Mumbai	Consortium of M/s. The Third Railway Survey and Design Institute Group Corporation (Chinese Consultant) and Lahmeyer International (India) Private Limited, India.
2.	Mumbai-Chennai	Consortium of M/s. SYSTRA (French Consultants), RITES and Ernst and Young LLP.
3.	Delhi-Kolkata	Consortium of M/s. INECO- M/s. TYPASA- M/s. Intercontinental Consultants and Technocrats Private Limited (Spanish Consultants).
4.	Delhi-Nagpur	Government to Government cooperation with Chinese Railway Company.
5.	Mumbai-Nagpur	Government to Government cooperation with Spanish Railway companies.

Production of pulses

†*72. SHRI HARIVANSH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the efforts being made by Government to control the increasing prices of pulses in the country;

(b) the steps taken by Government to increase the production of pulses;

(c) the reasons due to which the efforts being made by Government towards increasing the production of pulses are not yielding expected success; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH): (a) Government has taken several measures to control the prices of pulses. A Price Stabilization Fund (PSF) has been established for creating a buffer stock of pulses for effective market intervention, with procurement by designated agencies. Releases from the buffer stock are made to States/Union Territories (UTs) at subsidized rates for retail. Further, States/UTs have been advised to take strict action against hoarding and black marketing under the Essential Commodities (EC)

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Act, 1955 and the Prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Act, 1980. Pulses seized in raids are disposed of by auction or other means permitted under the EC Act. States have also been empowered under the EC Act to extend the stock limit on pulses till 30.09.2016.

Other steps include allowing import of pulses at zero duty and banning of exports except in kabuli channa and upto 10,000 metric tonnes per annum in organic pulses and lentils. To dampen speculation, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has banned new contracts in chana and disallowed taking fresh positions in respect of running contracts in chana. Further, the Government has recently entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Government of Mozambique for import of pulses through Government-to-Government sales.

(b) to (d) The long term solution to meet the demand for pulses lies in increased pulse production in the country. Pulses being mainly rain-fed crops, production is dependent on the vagaries of the monsoon. They are also prone to pest and diseases.

Government has taken various steps for increasing production of pulses. Cultivation of pulses is promoted mainly through the National Food Security Mission (NFSM), launched in 2007-08, and continued into the Twelfth Plan. From 2016-17, NFSM (Pulses) is being implemented in 638 districts in 29 States. The Mission gives financial assistance for interventions like demonstration of improved technology, distribution of quality seeds of new varieties, integrated pest management, integrated nutrient management, water saving devices and capacity building of farmers. The target is additional production of 4 million tonnes of pulses by the end of the Twelfth Plan.

Joint research on pulses by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) with the State Agriculture Universities has resulted in the release of 59 high yielding varieties of different pulses with tolerance to biotic and abiotic stresses during 2011-15. Breeder seeds of pulses were produced and supplied to different seed producing agencies to produce certified quality seeds for the farmers. Establishment of seed hubs on pulses and strengthening production units of bio-fertilizers and bio-control agents for pulses are also activities undertaken by ICAR.

To increase the area under pulses, the cultivation of pulses as inter-crop with cereals, oilseeds, commercial crops and on farm bunds of paddy fields is promoted. In the Eastern Region, cluster demonstrations are done in cropping system approach to utilize rice fallows for pulses cultivation in the rabi season.

To boost production of pulses, Minimum Support Prices (MSP) of all pulses for Kharif crop of 2016-17 season have been increased and bonus of ₹ 425/- per quintal, payable over MSP, has been accorded to tur, urad and moong.