

**Import of wheat**

1185. SHRI A. K. SELVARAJ: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is not considering to import wheat on Government account;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the country has enough wheat to meet the requirement under Public Distribution System;

(c) whether, as on 1 December, 2016, Food Corporation of India had 27.55 million tonnes of foodgrains, of which wheat was 16.4 million tonne and rice was 11 million tonne; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that Government is encouraging import of wheat by private players by scrapping import duty on wheat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C.R. CHAUDHARY): (a) Yes Sir, there is no proposal to import wheat on Government Account.

(b) Stock of wheat in the Central Pool as on 1st January, 2017 was 13.747 million tonnes against stocking norms of 12.8 million tonnes for the quarter January to March which is adequate to meet the requirement under Public Distribution System.

(c) The foodgrains stock in Central pool as on 1st December, 2016 was 27.55 million tonnes of which wheat was 16.5 million tonnes and Rice 11.05 million tonnes.

(d) Wheat procurement in Rabi Marketing Season (RMS) 2016-17 was 22.961 million tonnes against procurement of 28.088 million tonnes in Rabi Marketing Season (RMS) 2015-16 and 28.023 million tonnes in Rabi Marketing Season (RMS) 2014-15. Keeping in view the public interest, Government of India reduced the import duty from 25% to 10% *vide* notification dated 23rd September, 2016 and then further from 10% to Zero percent *vide* notification dated 8th December, 2016.

**Foodgrains storage capacity**

†1186. SHRI NARESH AGRAWAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that proper arrangement of foodgrains' storage is not there even today;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) if not, the current foodgrains production and storage capacity thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) No, Sir. On the basis of peak stock requirement during procurement season, the overall storage capacity required in the country is about 600 Lakh MT. Against this, the total capacity available with Food Corporation of India (FCI) and State Agencies for storage of foodgrains as on 31.01.2017 was 775.74 lakh MT. Thus, on the overall, there is sufficient capacity for storage of foodgrains in the country.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

**Enlisting of applicants in west bengal for providing subsidised rice**

1187. SHRI RITABRATA BANERJEE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that only a small percentage of the applicants are enlisted to avail 2 per kg. rice in West Bengal;

(b) if so, what were the total number of applicants, and how many of them have been enlisted; and

(c) the reasons for disallowing so many applicants from availing the facility?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (c) Under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), the percentage coverage determined for West Bengal for receiving highly subsidized foodgrains is 74.47% of rural and 47.55% of urban population, which at 2011 census population works out to be 601.84 lakh persons. Within this coverage, it is the responsibility of the State Government, as per the Act, to identify AAY households to the extent specified by the Central Government, in accordance with the guidelines applicable to the Scheme and remaining households as priority households as per the criteria evolved by the State Government. Implementation of the Act in West Bengal has started w.e.f. June, 2015 and based on identification of beneficiaries reported by the State Government, foodgrains as per the provisions of the Act is being allocated to West Bengal for the entire coverage of 601.84 lakh persons.

**Coverage of beneficiaries under NFSA**

1188. SHRI HARSHVARDHAN SINGH DUNGARPUR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria to include States under coverage of beneficiaries under National Food Security Act (NFSA);