

Government of India
Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
Department of Consumer Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1760
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27.07.2022

STORAGE FACILITIES FOR ONION

1760. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI:

Will the Minister of **CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION**
उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री be pleased to state:

- (a) whether average production of onion in the country during 2020-21 was 269 million tonnes as against the consumption of 156 lakh tonnes;
- (b) if so, whether even with the high production of onion in the country, the prices of onion shoots up during several months and the Government has to import onion to keep the price in check;
- (c) whether due to improper storage facilities loss of nearly 1100 crore is reported per year;
- (d) if so, whether the Ministry has asked more than 100 universities including technical universities to explore ways and means in improving storage of onion in the country; and
- (e) if so, the facilities likely to be provided by the Government to these universities for innovative ideas and procedure for lowering storage loss of onion in the country?

ANSWER

उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य और सार्वजनिक वितरण राज्य मंत्री
(श्री अश्विनी कुमार चौबे)

THE MINISTER OF STATE
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a) to (e) : Onion production in 2020-21 as per the Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare was 266.41 Lakh Metric Ton (LMT) and onion consumption in 2020-21 as per market intelligence report was 160.50 LMT.

Due to its perishable nature and gap between the *rabi* and *kharif* crops, the prices of onion tend to increase during the lean months of September to December. To stabilize the prices of onion, the Government maintained buffer stock of 2.0 LMT in 2021-22 and 2.5 LMT in 2022-23, and the Government has not imported onion during 2021-22 and 2022-23. The overall post-harvest losses of onion occurs due to several factors like loss of moisture content, fungal infection, decay loss, sprouting loss etc. which may be reduced through improved storage facilities.

To address the problem of post-harvest loss of onions, the Department of Consumer Affairs has rolled out a Hackathon/ Grand challenge to the scientific community, researchers and startups for seeking ideas and development of prototype for post-harvest storage of onions. There are four verticals of the challenge namely, improvements in the designs of storage structures, pre-harvesting stage, primary processing and valorization; value addition and utilisation of onion waste. The challenge has been rolled out in three stages. There will be evaluation of ideas, technology solutions at three stages namely, ideation to proof of concept stage, proof of concept to product stage and field implementation. Agriculture Universities and the Central Universities have been informed about the challenge with the request to disseminate the challenge for ensuring maximum participation. There is no provision for separate facilities to be provided to the universities.
