

**Supply of Inferior Quality of Foodgrains by FCI**

1722. SHRI ANNASHEB M.K. PATIL : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Director General of Investigation and Registration (DGIR) filed an application with the Monopolies & Restrictive Trade Practices Commission (MRTPC) for action against FCI for allegedly supplying inferior quality of foodgrains for the PDS;

(b) if so, the details of the complaint;

(c) the details of action taken thereon; and

(d) the details of fresh initiative taken to ensure that the quality of foodgrains is not tampered with by the vested interests?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Director General of Investigation and Registration (DGIR) has filed an application with the Monopolies & Restrictive Trade Practices Commission (MRTPC) on the ground that the Food Corporation of India has over-charged the consumers in the State of Kerala.

The application of DGIR is based on the C&AG Report that the Food Corporation of India has overcharged the consumers by issuing lower group of rice in higher group, in the State of Kerala. The C&AG has alleged that the FCI has earned an amount of Rs. 418.71 lakhs and customers have been over-charged to that extent.

(c) The Food Corporation of India has given a detailed reply to the MRTPC listing therein the procedure being followed in the issue, of rice under Public Distribution System. As per the procedure foodgrains are moved from the procuring States to the consuming States and the stocks so despatched should contain the details of the group of stocks. In the case of loss of despatching documents in transit, the group of stocks is determined on the basis of the result of spot analysis by a Committee of Officers. This becomes inevitable because waiting for the despatched documents would result in delay in the issue of foodgrains. The spot analysis has resulted into upgradation of rice in 0.03% cases and down-gradation in 0.003% cases. The error could happen either way.

(d) As a remedial action, to avoid recurrence of such cases, instructions have been issued by the Food Corporation of India that the stocks of foodgrains without despatching details will be issued only after confirmation of the group of the despatched stocks.

**Insurgency in NER**

1723. SHRI KESHAB MAHANTA : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned "North East going the

Kashmir way' appearing in the Assam Tribune, dated February 16, 1997

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) are increasing its activities because of the alarming increase of Muslim population in the region;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken to check their scheme ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The activities of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) are kept under surveillance and appropriate decisions taken from time to time.

(c) and (d) Links of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence with some of the North-East insurgent groups and Muslim fundamentalist groups have come to notice. A close watch is being kept on their activities.

(e) Intelligence machinery for collection, analysis and sharing of information has been improved and there is better coordination between the various agencies.

**Death of Elephants Due to Starvation**

1724. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the report appearing in the 'Statesman' dated December 30, 1996 that a large number of elephants in the Kazhiranga and Manas reserves of Assam have starved to death during the past six months but for non-payment of bills for elephant feed to its suppliers;

(b) if so, number of elephants who died due to starvation and otherwise in Assam and in other States during the said period and in the preceding two spells of six months each; and

(c) the action taken in the matter and the steps proposed to be taken to preserve this majestic animal ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) The Government has seen the newspaper report in the Statesman of December 30, 1996. The State Government has reported that there is no death of departmental elephants by starvation during 1995-96.

(b) The information on captive elephants in India is not compiled or collated in this Ministry as large number of elephants are owned by private individuals and organisations. The number of wild elephants reported to have died due to natural causes and poaching is given in the Statement enclosed.

(c) To preserve the majestic animal, the elephant have been placed under the Schedule I of the Wild Life

(Protection) Act, 1972. In order to discourage poaching of tuskers, a ban has been placed on the trade in ivory. For international control, the elephant has been included in Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES), which

prohibits international trade among the signatory countries in ivory. In order to strengthen the protection of elephant populations and their natural habitats in India, the Government of India has launched Project Elephant to provide assistance to the elephant range states.

**Statement**

Sl. No.	State	1993-94		1994-95		1995-96	
		N	P	N	P	N	P
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Nil	1	Nil	1	Nil	Nil
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	Nil	Nil	4	Nil	2	Nil
3.	Assam	20	4	24	3	14	6
4.	Bihâr	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	1
5.	Karnataka	3	12	4	18	—	10
6.	Kerala	6	6	33	3	34	3
7.	Meghalaya	Nil	1	7	1	9	10
8.	Nagaland	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	6	8
9.	Orissa	—	12	—	13	6	10
10.	Tamil Nadu	—	2	—	4	—	7
11.	Uttar Pradesh	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	—	19
12.	West Bengal	12	2	13	3	6	3
Total		41	40	85	46	77	77

**Child Labour**

1725. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are convening a meeting to discuss the strategy on the growing problems of child labour and street children;

(b) if so, the time by which a meeting is likely to be convened;

(c) whether the Ministry have also decided to set up a 15 member Committee to suggest the ways and means for making the functions of NGOs and other social organisations engaged in the rehabilitation programmes of children more effective and purposeful;

(d) if so, the details in this regard; and

(e) the steps Government propose to take in this direction ?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA): (a) to (e) The information is

being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

**Prices of Rice, Wheat etc. under P.D.S.**

1726. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO :  
SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN :  
SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH :  
SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY :

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering a hike in the Central issue prices of rice, wheat and other essential commodities being distributed under the Public Distribution System;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) the number of items and extent of increase in their prices during the last three years;

(d) whether any final decision to hike the prices of these items has been taken; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?