

(v) Disability Benefit

Disability benefit, in respect of all cases of loss of earning capacity of 70% or more and not necessarily occupational or employment related, must be available, on par with old age pension and subject to some income criterion, to all eligible persons between the age group of 18 and 60 years. The existing efforts for rehabilitation of the disabled will have to be considerably strengthened. An expert group may examine the questions relating to the manner of determining the extent of disability and incapacity to work as well as the support scheme needed for them.

(vi) Sickness Benefit

A scheme of sickness benefit to compensate for loss of earnings arising out of illness is recommended under which all rural persons within the age group 18 to 60 will, on hospitalisation in a recognised hospital, be entitled to the benefit for a maximum of 90 days at the rate of the daily minimum wage rate for unskilled labour in agriculture. The benefit will be restricted to those from families whose annual income is less than Rs. 6,400/- at 1990-91 prices.

(vii) Crop Insurance Scheme

The comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme must cover all States and all crops. The restriction in the scheme covering only those who take loans from Co-operatives, Commercial Banks and Regional Rural Banks should be done away with. A system of differential premium rates for the existing clientele at lower level and for those who do not take recourse to cooperatives etc. for their credit needs at slightly higher level could be fixed.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

- (i) Right to work as a Fundamental Right with certain qualifications and an Employment Guarantee Act to implement this;
- (ii) A comprehensive Central legislation for Agricultural Labour providing for their protection and welfare;

(iii) A National Commission for Bonded Labour functioning as quasi-judicial Authority to oversee and monitor the implementation of the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976;

(iv) A model legislation for protection of home based workers and their welfare;

(v) Land Tribunals at the local level for speedy disposal of land reforms cases.

INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM FOR IMPLEMENTATION

(vi) Active involvement of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in the implementation of various recommendations of the NCRL; and

(vii) A separate Department of Rural Labour at the Centre and in the States with an independent Directorate of Rural Labour in the States to deal with all aspects of Rural Labour, etc.

All Ministries/Departments concerned with specific recommendations have duly examined the recommendations. The Action Taken Report on the recommendations of the National Commission on Rural Labour *inter-alia* reflecting Government response to all major recommendations has already been laid on the Table of both the Houses.

[English]

Ban on Bands

1563. SHRI SUNIL KHAN:
DR. ASIM BALA:
SHRI BIKASH CHOWDHURY:
SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court has imposed ban on bands;

(b) if so, the total number of bands organised in the country after the imposition of such a ban;

(c) whether the Government agrees that the ban on bandh is impractical; and

(d) if so, the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) Yes, Sir. Government is aware of the judgement delivered by the Supreme Court in this regard.

(b) As per information available, 250 bandhs were organised in the country, at the State, District and local levels, since the judgement of the Supreme Court.

(c) and (d) Under the Constitution, 'Public Order' and 'Police' are State subjects, and as such it is for the State Governments to take a view in the matter.

Procurement of Foodgrains

1564. SHRI AMAR PAL SINGH:
SHRI RANJIB BISWAL:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of rice, wheat and other foodgrains procured by the Food Corporation of India during each of the last three years and the current year, State-wise;

(b) the quantum of these items spoiled in the godowns of the Food Corporation of India during 1997-98 till date; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to prevent such losses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV): (a) Statements-I, II and III giving requisite information are attached.

(b) A quantity of 75,669 MT got spoiled in FCI godowns during the year 1997-98 while a quantity of 81,028 MT got spoiled during the period 1.4.98 to 1.10.98. In terms of total quantity procured and handled, the quantity spoiled is just a fraction of it which is insignificant negligible.

(c) Utmost care is taken to protect, preserve and properly store the foodgrains. However, some quantity gets spoiled due to natural uncontrollable factors such as excessive and unseasonal rains, floods, cyclones etc. To maintain foodgrains in their best health, due care is taken on the proper up-keep of the godowns to avoid leakages, flooding etc.

The stocks stored in open are properly covered with polythene covers and tied with nylon ropes so as to avoid blowing/tearing of polythene covers to check the pouring of rain water through the holes or torn portion.

Further, the stocks are given periodical turn-over and if need be, segregation and salvaging of the affected stocks, if any, is resorted to save the foodgrains from further deterioration.

Frequent and timely prophylactic and curative treatments are provided to the grains to prevent spoilage of the grains by insect infestation.

Statement I

Procurement of Rice made by the Food Corporation of India for the last three years & current year

(Figures in Lakh MTs)

State	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99 (As on 3.12.98)
1	2	3	4	5
Punjab	12.13	19.33	32.70	15.81
Haryana	6.55	11.64	12.12	0.36
Uttar Pradesh	—	—	10.65	—
Rajasthan	0.02	0.03	0.06	0.01