

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4594  
ANSWERED ON:22.05.2006  
IMPACT OF WHEAT IMPORT  
Ahir Shri Hansraj Gangaram;Shivanna Shri M

**Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government has approved duty free import of wheat in view of the shortage in the country;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has made any assessment of its adverse impact on the farmers in the country; and
- (c) the rationale behind import of wheat when the procurement during the current season is already underway?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION ( SHRI SHARAD PAWAR )

- (a): Yes, Sir. The Government has exempted payment of custom duty on import of 5.00 lakh MTs of wheat, when imported into India through the Ports at Chennai, Tuticorin, Cochin, Visakhapatnam, Mangalore and Kakinada by the State Trading Corporation of India Ltd.
- (b): There has not been any adverse impact of the above import on the farmers of the country, since farmers have been assured prices at least above the Minimum Support Price, plus a bonus of Rs.50/- per quintal.
- (c): The decision to import wheat was taken in view of the following:
  - (i) Stock of wheat in the Central Pool as on 1.4.2006 was 20 lakh tonnes which was 20 lakh tonnes lower than the buffer norm of 40 lakh tonnes for 1st April.
  - (ii) Need to build up adequate buffer stock to meet the commitment under Public Distribution System (PDS) and Welfare Schemes;
  - (iii) Lower than normal production of wheat;
  - (iv) Low level of procurement of wheat in the Central Pool.