

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4501  
ANSWERED ON:30.08.2011  
DAMAGE TO FOODGRAINS  
Patil Shri C. R.

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

- (a) whether taking a serious view of damage to foodgrains on one hand and prevalence of hunger and rising prices on the other, the Government proposes to make such incidents of negligence a punishable criminal offence and to take strict action in such cases;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the other steps taken/proposed to be taken to check damage to foodgrains in future;
- (d) whether import of foodgrains is considered to be cheaper than creation of additional storage space;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) if not, the reasons for import of foodgrains instead of increasing the storage capacity?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a) & (b): No such proposal is under consideration.

(c): State Governments have been requested to follow the instructions issued by Government of India regarding safe and proper storage of foodgrains in covered and CAP storage to avoid damages during storage. Recently, these instructions were reiterated vide Department's letter dated 06.07.2011. These measures include continuous monitoring of quality of foodgrains during procurement, storage and distribution, to follow code of practices for safe storage in covered and CAP storage, to take all precautionary measures like prophylactic and curative treatment for insect pest control, regular periodic inspection of stocks to assess the quality. In addition, additional covered storage capacity has been planned to be created.

(d), (e) & (f): The volatility in foodgrain prices at the international level has increased and in absolute terms they have only been going up, especially in last one year. Considering the price rise, the import of foodgrains is no longer a cheap option. Strategically it is also not expedient to rely upon other countries for our food security. Our requirement of foodgrains have also been rising because of the rise in our population and also because of the requirements of our Public Distribution System and Other Welfare Schemes through which the Government reaches the foodgrains to most vulnerable sections of the society at subsidized prices, for which there is always a need to maintain buffer stocks and reserves, which requires additional storage capacity. With the forthcoming legislation on National Food Security Act, the requirement for procurement of foodgrains and its distribution through PDS will increase further, thus requiring even more storage capacity in all the States.

As far as the cost of additional storage space is concerned, the Government has formulated a Scheme for construction of godowns through private entrepreneurs under Private Public Partnership mode with a view to reduce dependence on CAP (Open Storage) by construction of covered godowns both in procurement as well as consumption areas. A capacity of about 152.97 lakh tons has been planned for 19 States under the Scheme through private entrepreneurs and Central and State Warehousing Corporations. CWC and SWCs are constructing 5.31 and 15.49 lakh tons respectively under the Scheme, out of which, a capacity of about 3.5 lakh tons has already been completed.

Thus it will be seen that creation of additional storage space with the help of PEG Scheme is without any initial cost to the Government exchequer. As far as the import of foodgrains on Government account by FCI, there has been no such import during the years 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12. Fortunately in the last two years the country had very high levels of production and procurement of foodgrains because of which no imports were required.