

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3199

ANSWERED ON:11.02.2014

SAARC FOOD BANK

Mahato Shri Narahari; Roy Shri Nripendra Nath; Tirkey Shri Manohar

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

- (a) whether the Government contributes foodgrains to the SAARC Food Bank;
- (b) if so, the details and the terms and conditions thereof indicating the contribution made by the Government along with the corpus of the said Food Bank during the last three years and the current year;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to reconsider its commitment to the said Food Bank in view of the drought and shortage of foodgrains in the country; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

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

(a) Yes, Madam.

(b) The Agreement on establishing the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Food Bank has been signed at the Fourteenth SAARC Summit held at New Delhi during April 2007. The objectives of the SAARC Food Bank are :-

- i. to act as a regional food security reserve for the SAARC Member Countries during normal time food shortages and emergencies; and
- ii. to provide regional support to national food security efforts; foster inter-country partnerships and regional integration, and solve regional food shortages through collective action.

Initially 2,43,000 Metric Tons (MTs) of foodgrains (both rice and wheat) were kept as Bank Reserve in which India's assessed share was 1,53,200 MTs. This was increased to 4,86,000 MTs in 2010 and presently India's share is 3,06,400 MTs.

India's assessed share of foodgrains has been kept as reserve in designated Godowns of the Food Corporation of India (FCI). None of the member countries have so far drawn any foodgrains from SAARC Food Bank.

(c) and (d) No Madam, because Bank has been set up for such eventualities only.