

ont>

Title: Need to open additional paddy purchase centres in Cuttack and other parts of Orissa. – Laid.

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK) : Earlier, Food Corporation of India was not directly involved in the procurement of paddy in Orissa. With a lot of persuasion, FCI has agreed to open only 20 paddy purchase centres during the current kharif year 2003-04 to extend price support measures to the farmers in six revenue districts leaving out most of the coastal districts, which are termed as the granary of Orissa. The farmers are forced to sell paddy at a very lower rate and distress sale of paddy is creating serious tension amongst the people. As paddy is the main crop on which farmers of Orissa sustain themselves, there is an urgent need to open more number of paddy purchase centres throughout the State, especially in Cuttack and FCI should purchase paddy directly from farmer as a measure of market intervention.

There are 30 districts in Orissa and the State is a paddy surplus State. Due to lack of market intervention, the farmers of the State, especially of Hiraikund and Mahanadi Irrigation system are forced to sell their paddy at a very cheaper rate. Therefore, I urge the Government to immediately impress upon the FCI to open at least another 50 purchase centres in Orissa at the earliest.