

Title: Need to revitalise the Food Corporation of India to make Public Distribution System more effective.

SHRI T. GOVINDAN (KASARGOD): I would like to draw the attention of the Minister of Food & Civil Supplies towards the crisis being faced by the Food Corporation of India. The steep increase in price of foodgrains released through Public Distribution System has put the entire system and the FCI in a great crises. More than 75 per cent of the population categorised above poverty line have been denied benefit of subsidy. Prices of foodgrains supplied to section of people living below poverty line have been increased by 68 per cent. Consequent of this issue price rise, the foodgrain offtake from the FCI godowns has almost been paralysed. Crores of rupees worth food grains get decayed and destroyed in the FCI godowns especially being kept in open space. The Government of India estimates Rs. 1,100 crore earnings. But the Government lose Rs. 20,000 crore by way of damage to the food grains kept in open space. The population of the country has crossed 100 crore. We will have to feed more mouths. For the last 40 years, due to the prompt functioning of the FCI, our nation achieved a food security. The policy of closing down the FCI and allow private Indian and foreign monopolies in the food Sector will ruin the food security of the nation.

So, I request the Government to consider the following:-

Withdraw the curtailment in food/fertiliser subsidy;

Rollback the hike effected in the issue prices of foodgrains distributed through PDS;

Avoid privatisation and entry of foreign multinationals in the food sector completely;

Foodgrains may be distributed to all the sections of the people, without considering the financial strata, at subsidised rates;

Effective steps may be taken to retain and make the PDS more effective; and

The move to bring the shrinkage in the FCI activities may be given up; instead the activities of the FCI be revitalised.