

Title: Reported reduction in allocation of rice and wheat through PDS to Kerala.

SHRI T.K. HAMZA (MANJERI): Hon. Chairman, Sir, Kerala State was having an excellent and full-fledged Public Distribution System when compared with any other State in India. But due to change of policy by the Government of India since April, 2000 by giving more importance to the Targeted Public Distribution System, the Public Distribution System in Kerala is facing a very critical situation for the last five years now.

But due to repeated reduction in the allotment of the Public Distribution System in respect of wheat, kerosene, and due to stoppage of barley sugar to cardholders other than the BPL people in Kerala, the Public Distribution System in Kerala is on the verge of collapse. Kerala, which is a consumer State, is facing the threat of price hike more than any other State.

Now, according to the Press reports, the private agencies have been permitted by the Government of India to procure and store as much quantity of wheat as they desire, removing all the stock limits prescribed. In that case, the FCI will not be getting any stock in godowns.

The hon. Minister's attention is also invited to the continuous cut in the allotment of rice and wheat to the State. During the last 27 years, the rice allotted has been cut short from 1,59,641 MT to 68,755 MT, and the wheat allotted has been cut short from 37,000 MT to 11,000 MT.

Sir, if this situation continues, I am afraid, the Public Distribution System would collapse leading to price hike, famine and starvation. Therefore, the hon. Food Minister may kindly consider this problem of Kerala seriously, and the *status quo* may be maintained in the allotment of wheat and rice.