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Title: Need to take steps to ameliorate the plight of paddy growers .

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU (SRIKAKULAM): Sir, there is a widespread unrest in the farming community in Andhra Pradesh due to severe discrimination in determining the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Paddy. It is estimated that the farmers in the country produce about 90 million tonnes of paddy. There is a misapprehension that when-paddy is converted to rice, only 65% is redeemed and the balance is wasted. However, the residual products like husk, broken rice etc., are valuable and marketable products. 100 kg of milled-paddy would yield 65 kg rice; 10-12 kg of broken rice, 8 kg of cattle feed and the balance would be husk. The Government already has a scheme to modernize all rice mills to enhance the yield of rice and minimize wastage in milling. Hence, the difference in value between wheat and rice is very marginal and accordingly the minimum support price difference also should be marginal. Government of India is spending a huge sum of money on Food Corporation of India (FCI) for maintaining the buffer stocks. Compared to the expenditure by FCI, the additional support given to the rice farmer by way of a proper minimum support price is negligible. Given these problems, the Public Distribution System needs to be reoriented to meet the requirements of the people below poverty line by creating Grain Banks managed at the local level. It will definitely reduce transaction, transport, handling and storage costs, while enhancing rural employment opportunities. Our farmers should also be supported by strong government protection through minimum support prices whenever the prices are depressed.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government of India to understand the gravity of the situation and to ameliorate the problems of paddy growers in Andhra Pradesh by promptly enhancing the Minimum Support Price of Paddy to Rs. 1000/- per quintal.