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Title: Smt. Harsimrat Kaur Badal called the attention of the Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution to the situation arising out of lack of storage and stock-holding facility for FCI procured foodgrains in different parts of the country and particularly in Punjab, due to non-transportation of the procured foodgrains to deficit states.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House shall now take up Item No. 8, Calling Attention.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Rajnath Singh.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri P. C. Mohan.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shrimati Harsimrat Kaur Badal.

...(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI HARSIMRAT KAUR BADAL (BHATINDA): Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

"The situation arising out of lack of storage and stock-holding facility for FCI procured food grains in different parts of the country and particularly in Punjab due to non-transportation of the procured food grains to deficit States."

...(Interruptions)

Sir, if the House is not in order, how can I speak? ...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Minister, please lay your Statement on the Table.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): Sir, with your permission, I beg to lay the Statement on the Table of the House.

*Government of India has been making constant efforts to move out food grain stock out of Punjab and other surplus States to deficit and consuming States. Over the period of time, procurement as well as movement of food grains from Punjab has increased. The movement of food grains from Punjab increased to 165.88 lakh tonnes during the year 2010-11 compared to movement of 119.28 lakh tonnes out of Punjab in 2008-09. During the year 2011-12 (provisional figures till 31st August) 67.67 lakh tonnes of food grains were moved out of Punjab compared to 63.78 lakh tonnes during the same period in 2010-11.

During the Rabi Marketing Season 2011-12, procurement of wheat has reached an all time high level of 281.44 lakh tonnes.

In M.P., Rajasthan and U.P., procurement this year has been substantially higher than last year. During 2010-11 the combined procurement in these three States was 56.7 lakh tonnes. In 2011- 12, the combined procurement in three States reached the level of 96.56 lakh tonnes.

As a result of higher procurement of wheat in M.P, Rajasthan and U.P., outward movement of wheat from Punjab has been affected. Earlier, the requirement of major wheat consuming States like Maharashtra and Gujarat was met by moving

wheat from Punjab. However, this year, due to substantially higher procurement in U.P., M.P. and Rajasthan, there is no vacant space to store wheat moved from Punjab into these States. In fact movement of wheat to the extent of 8.26 lakh tonnes has been made out of Madhya Pradesh up to July to deficit states.

Production and procurement of rice has also been high this year in Andhra Pradesh necessitating movement of rice ex-Andhra of about 17.6 lakh tonnes up to July to deficit States.

However, the overall movement of wheat and rice out of Punjab in 2010-11 was higher than the previous year. This year also, Government of India is continuing effort to move as much wheat and rice out of Punjab as possible. During 2011-12, it is estimated that by September end, 84.47 lakh tonnes of wheat and rice will be moved out of the State whereas during 2010-11 during the same period, 78.42 lakh tonnes of wheat and rice was moved out of the State.

Despite these constraints, there is no problem in acceptance of rice stocks by FCI in Punjab. As on 1.7.2011, FCI had a vacant covered storage capacity of 8.1 lakh tonnes against which 3.35 lakh tonnes of rice was delivered by millers in Punjab. Similarly, on 1.8.2011, FCI had a vacant covered storage capacity of 12 lakh tonnes against which 3.97 lakh tonnes of rice was delivered by millers in Punjab. It is expected that delivery of fresh crop rice by millers will start from January, 2012. In the intervening period, FCI will evacuate further stocks of wheat and rice from Punjab which will create sufficient additional vacant storage capacity for acceptance of KMS 2011-12 rice. As far as acceptance of wheat in RMS 2012-13 is concerned, it is expected that a substantial amount of capacity of about 30 lakh tonnes sanctioned under PEG will be ready by then including 6 to 7 lakh tonnes in Punjab. This will not only help in keeping milled Rice of KMS 2011-12 and procured wheat of RMS 2012-13 in Punjab but also in moving out surplus wheat and rice to consuming States also where there will be new addition to existing storage capacities.

In order to create additional covered storage space, Government has formulated a scheme for construction of go-downs through private entrepreneurs under Private Public Partnership mode with a view to reduce dependence on CAP (Open Storage) by construction of covered go-downs both in procurement as well as consumption areas through private entrepreneurs, CWC and SWCs. A capacity of 152.97 lakh tonnes has been planned for creation in 19 States under the Scheme through private entrepreneurs and Central and State Warehousing Corporations. CWC and SWCs are constructing 5.31 and 15.49 lakh tonnes respectively under the Scheme, out of which, a capacity of about 3.5 lakh tonnes has already been completed. About 30 lakh tonnes of new capacity is likely to be completed by March, 2012 under the scheme while substantial amount of new capacities will be added in next one year or so thereafter.

However, wheat is also stored in Cover and Plinth (CAP) temporarily in surplus States like Punjab and Haryana before it is evacuated to deficit States. However, CAP is a scientific storage. Some wheat is also lying in kutcha plinths but wheat is being moved out on priority from there. *In spite of* all precautions some quantity of wheat does get damaged due to various reasons. However, such damaged quantity is very small compared to overall quantity handled by FCI and other Government agencies. The quantity of damaged stocks over last few years with FCI is as follows:-

2007 - 08 - 34,426 tonnes

2008- 09 - 20,114 tonnes

2009- 10 - 6,702 tonnes

2010- 11 - 6,346 tonnes

2011- 12 - 541.33 tonnes

(up to 1st July)

A total 76.29 lakh tonnes of storage capacity was available with FCI in Punjab up to 31.3.2011 in addition to 115.45 lakh tonnes available with State Government/other agencies. Against this, as on 1.8.2011, 85.98 lakh tonnes of rice and 128 lakh tonnes of wheat were available in the Central Pool in Punjab. Under the FCI's Guarantee Scheme creation of 51.25 lakh tonnes capacity has been approved to be created in Punjab by CWC, SWC and private entrepreneurs. Out of this, a capacity of 20.1 lakh tonnes has been finalized in Punjab to be created by the Private Entrepreneurs. Tenders for creation of 22 lakh tonnes capacity are in the process of being finalized. Out of 51.25 lakh tonnes of total capacity sanctioned CWC and PSWC have been allotted 0.782 lakh tonnes and 2.895 lakh tonnes respectively. Out of this, 1.356 lakh tonnes has already been handed over while the remaining is likely to be handed over to FCI by March 2012.

The Government is making all out effort to ensure higher off-take by consuming States. Government of India has made a number of additional allocations to various State Governments. However, lifting in many States is poor. If the consuming

States lift their allocations, it would be possible to move more stocks out of Punjab and other surplus States to deficit States. The matter is being regularly pursued with the consuming States. As a result of additional allocations made by Government of India off-take in 2011-12 are higher than the off-take in 2010-11. During 2011-12, 180.42 lakh tonnes of wheat and rice was lifted under PDS till July, 2011 compared to 159.36 lakh tonnes in the same period last year. The long-term solution however lies in creation of additional storage capacity in procuring as well consuming States for which we are already working for creation of additional capacities under the PEG scheme and in increased off-take of food grains by States.*

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House stands adjourned to meet again at 2.00 p.m.

12.10 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Fourteen of the Clock.

*The Lok Sabha re-assembled at One Minute past Fourteen
of the Clock.*

(Mr. Deputy-Speaker *in the Chair*)

SHRIMATI HARSIMRAT KAUR BADAL (BHATINDA): In a country whose population is growing at more than 15 million per year, the most important and vital thing for the growth of the nation is the production of its food. A nation can only grow if its people are not hungry. After production of food, the next most important thing is the way this grain is stored because it is this very food that ensures the food security of the nation.

Today, in our country, a farmer utilises all his resources, puts in his blood and sweat and toils hard to feed this nation. In the process of using all his resources to give a crop, we are also utilising all our natural resources soil and water which are getting depleted due to over-utilisation.

Today, in our country, where in the last four years, the cost of inputs of a farmer has risen by 60 per cent, the Government has only increased the MSP by Rs. 20 for wheat and Rs. 100 for Rice which is not even 10 per cent increase in price. In spite of these things, you will be surprised to know that the farmers of our country have produced an all time bumper crop and today, our central pool has 654 lakh tonnes of wheat and rice. According to the Ministry, the required amount of buffer stock in the Central pool is 319 lakh tonnes. But, today the buffer stock lying in the country is 654 lakh tonnes.

Now, I want to tell you that 654 lakh tonnes of grains is lying in the country which is double the amount of required buffer stock. ये किस हालात में देश का अनाज गोदामों में पड़ा हुआ है। Against 654 lakh tonnes of grain, this country has storage capacity of only 446 lakh tonnes and the remaining 210 lakh tonnes is lying outside which is exposed to heat, rain, flood, insect, animal, rat, pilferage.

आप जो भी हालात का अंदाज़ा लगा सकते हैं, येज़ टेलीविज़न और अखबारों में देखने को मिलता है कि बोरियों के ढेर रुले पड़े हैं, जिनके बीच में जानवर और चूहे अपना पेट भर रहे हैं। जिस देश में 22 करोड़ आदमी भूखे सोते हैं, 25 लाख लोगों की मौत हमारे देश में भूख के कारण होती है। उधर यह सरकार दुगुना बफ़र स्टॉक होर्ड करके उन लोगों को भूखे मरने दे रही है और इस बात पर आपको हैरानी होगी कि इसी हाउस में मंत्री जी ने जवाब दिया था कि 319 लाख टन का जो बफ़र स्टॉक होता है, जिसको देश की सरकार बचाकर रखती है ताकि वह कृप फेल्योर, फ्लड आ जाए, ड्राउट हो जाए या कोई नैचुरल कैलेमिटी हो जाए तो सरकार

के पास इतना अन्न हो कि देश भूखा न मरे। लेकिन इसका दुगुना अनाज इन्होंने होर्ड कर दिया। आपको हैरानी होगी कि ये 300 लाख टन अतिरिक्त अनाज होर्ड कर रहे हैं। इनके मंत्री ने खुद बताया है कि होर्डिंग की कैरिंग कॉस्ट 27 करोड़ रूपए प्रति दिन है। यह खर्च एक्स्ट्रा होर्डिंग करने के लिए है। 335 लाख टन सरकार का एक्स्ट्रा बफर स्टॉक है। यह सरकार एक्स्ट्रा होर्डिंग करने के लिए 27 करोड़ के हिसाब से एक साल में 13 हजार करोड़ रूपए खर्च करती है। इस साल इस सरकार के पास 259 लाख टन अनाज जो पड़ा है, ये दोनों मिलाकर एक दिन का 27 करोड़ रूपए का हिसाब लगाकर पूरे 23000 करोड़ रूपए होते हैं। सरकार अन्न के स्टॉक होर्डिंग करने के लिए 23000 करोड़ रूपए खर्च कर रही है। आज 22 करोड़ आदमी रोज भूखे सो रहे हैं, एक साल में 25 लाख लोग भूख से मर रहे हैं और यह सरकार कह रही है कि स्टोरेज इंप्रूंपर होने के कारण अन्न सड़ रहा है।

महोदय, यह सरकार की कौन-सी नीतियां हैं? मैं पूछना चाहती हूँ कि 23000 करोड़ रूपए आप होर्डिंग में बर्बाद कर रहे हैं और एक्स्ट्रा स्टोरेज बनाने के लिए आप क्या खर्च कर रहे हैं? पिछले बजट में अतिरिक्त स्टोरेज बनाने के लिए 40 करोड़ रूपए स्वीकृत हुए और इस बजट में 87 करोड़ रूपए स्वीकृत हुए। कुल मिलाकर 127 करोड़ रूपए नए स्टोरेज बनाने के लिए और 23000 करोड़ रूपए फालतू का स्टॉक करने के लिए, होर्ड करने के लिए यह सरकार खर्च कर रही है।

मुझे समझ में नहीं आता कि इस सरकार की सोच क्या है? आप एक्स्ट्रा स्टॉक गरीबों में बांटे। जिन तीन राज्यों में बाढ़ आई है, जिन राज्यों के लोगों को आप पेट भरने के लिए पूरे दिन भर का बीस रूपए बाढ़ सहायता/बाढ़ राहत देते हैं, आज वहां सूखा पड़ा है, बाढ़ आया हुआ है, आप एक्स्ट्रा स्टॉक उन्हें बांटे और अपने गो-डाउन खाली करें। आप 23000 करोड़ रूपए बचाएं। मैं यह जवाब मांगना चाहती हूँ कि आप साइंटिफिक स्टोरेज को किर्येट क्यों नहीं करते हैं? आज हमारे राज्य पंजाब में 190 लाख टन से कम स्टोरेज है, 200 लाख टन अन्न भया पड़ा है और पन्द्रह दिनों में 140 लाख टन चावल का और स्टॉक आ रहा है। मैं सरकार से पूछना चाहती हूँ कि यह 350 लाख टन अनाज हम कहां रखें, यह अन्न हम कहां रखें क्योंकि आपकी मूवमेंट हर साल सिर्फ 14-15 लाख टन प्रति महीने की हो रही है।

महोदय, पन्द्रह दिनों में जो यह चावल का स्टॉक आ रहा है, इसे उठाने के लिए और रखने के लिए आज हमारे पास जगह नहीं है। जब किसान अपने अनाज मंडियों में ले जाता है और हम उसे उठा नहीं पाते तो इसके लिए कौन जिम्मेदार है? जब ये किसान दुखी होंगे कि उनकी फसल उठायी नहीं जा रही है, जब वे दंगा करेंगे, नायाज़गी दिखाएंगे तो इसके लिए कौन जिम्मेदार होगा? मैं पूछना चाहती हूँ कि इस सरकार की नीतियां क्या हैं? एक तरफ लोग भूखे मर रहे हैं, दूसरी तरफ ये लोग पैसा खर्च करके अन्न को सड़ा रहे हैं। तीसरी तरफ, किसानों को भी पूरा मूल्य नहीं दे रहे हैं। होर्डिंग करके बाज़ारों में कीमतें बढ़ा रहे हैं, गरीबी बढ़ा रहे हैं और भूखमरी बढ़ा रहे हैं। मैं इस सरकार से जवाब चाहती हूँ कि जो हमारे चावल का 110 लाख मीट्रिक टन का स्टॉक आ रहा है तो आप पन्द्रह दिनों में हमारे गोदाम खाली करके कितना लाख टन निकालेंगे ताकि मैं अपने किसानों को बता सकूँ कि हमारे पास जगह नहीं है, आप अपना अन्न मंडियों में ले जाने के बजाय दिल्ली ले जाकर सरकार के दरवाजे पर फेंकिए और फिर उनसे पूछिए कि इनका क्या किया जाए।

महोदय, मैं यह उम्मीद करती हूँ कि मंत्री जी गोलमोल जवाब देने के बजाए मुझे ठोस जवाब दें कि अगले पन्द्रह दिनों में कितने मीट्रिक टन अन्न उठाकर हमारे गो-डाउन खाली करके हमें दिए जाएंगे?

श्री गोपीनाथ मुंडे (बीड): उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, आज देश में ऐसी स्थिति निर्माण हुई है जिसके बारे में मंत्री महोदय इस सदन को जानकारी दें। सुप्रीम कोर्ट के न्यायाधीश ने कहा कि गो-डाउन में अनाज ज्यादा है और अनाज रखने के लिए भंडार नहीं है। इसके बावजूद भी सरकार ने इसके बारे में कोई फैसला नहीं किया। आज 107 लाख मीट्रिक टन अनाज सड़ रहे हैं और एक-तिहाई अनाज के खराब होने की संभावना है। यहां आज एक तरफ अनाज गो-डाउन में पड़ा है और दूसरी तरफ लोग भूखे मर रहे हैं।

महंगाई बढ़ी हुई है, लोग मार्केट से अनाज खरीद कर खा नहीं सकते हैं। इस समय गोडाउन में पड़ा हुआ अनाज मुफ्त या कम कीमतों में जनता को देने का निर्णय क्या सरकार करने वाली है? सन् 2009, 2010, 2011 और 2012, इन चार सालों में लगभग 20 परसेंट अनाज, विशेषतः पंजाब और हरियाणा में 25 परसेंट आज गोडाउन में नहीं है, वह बाहर भीग रहा है और सड़ रहा है। इसके बारे में सरकार क्या कर रही है? क्या आने वाले भविष्य में एफसीआई और सरकार मिल कर यह तय करेगी कि जितना अनाज आ गया है, उसे गोडाउन में रखना है या उसके लिए कोई नये गोडाउन बनाने के लिए सरकार प्रयास करेगी? दूसरा मेरा कहना यह है कि हमारे गोडाउन पुराने हो गए हैं, इस कारण से वहां अनाज जल्दी खराब हो जाता है। तीन साल तक गोडाउन में अनाज सुरक्षित रहे, ऐसी यंत्रणा का निर्माण करने के लिए क्या सरकार प्रयास करेगी, यह महत्वपूर्ण सवाल है? यहां अनाज सड़ रहा है और लोगों को अनाज मिल नहीं रहा है, यह स्थिति गंभीर है, इसके बारे में सरकार जवाब दे।

DR. K.S. RAO (ELURU): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I have heard the tone at which the hon. Member from Punjab has spoken. I support her. But if that were to be the tone at which a representative of the Punjab farmers should speak in Lok Sabha, our tone should be such where the top must go out. The reason is that the pathetic condition of the farmer in Andhra Pradesh cannot be explained. Andhra Pradesh is one State which is producing rice after West Bengal. The difference is that West Bengal is producing 155 lakhs and Andhra Pradesh is producing 145 lakhs. And the storage capacity that we have is so little that after purchasing the paddy from the farmers, they are putting it in the open area or in the elementary schools or in the community hall as there is no space available.

I am happy that we have got a good Minister who is very sensitive in this regard and immediately he has responded

to it by allowing the private sector to construct the storage capacity of 151 lakh metric tonnes under public, private partnership. I am not jealous of Punjab. I always support farmers. The worry is that Andhra Pradesh is given permission for 5.56 lakh metric tones of godown capacity while Punjab has got permission for more than 70 lakhs. ...(*Interruptions*) I am supporting her. I am not opposing. Wherever the farmer is, he must be helped. I am in favour of that.

â€¦!(*व्यवधान*)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय: बादल जी, आपने अभी जो बात कही है, राव जी, आपकी बात का समर्थन कर रहे हैं।

...(*Interruptions*)

DR. K.S. RAO : For the last six months, we have been representing the Government, not only the Minister of Agriculture, but the hon. Minister Prof. K.V. Thomas, the Finance Minister and the Prime Minister. We have been telling them that the paddy got dis-coloured because of the unprecedented heavy rains. All that we want is that boiled rice must be permitted to be exported so that this discoloured rice also can be converted into para-boiled and exported. There is a demand for this outside the country. All of them were very sympathetic. They agreed to give permission for export. Six months have passed and almost all the paddy has gone out of the hands of the farmers. It has gone into the hands of the rice millers. Now about a forty days back, they have permitted ten lakh metric tonnes to be exported. Even there, the pathetic condition is that because of the handling by various Ministries, particularly in the Ministry of Commerce, the whole of ten lakh metric tonnes was not allowed to be exported. How pathetic! We are not able to give an answer to the farmers in Andhra Pradesh. The hon. Minister was kind enough to tell us that another 20 lakh metric tonnes of rice will be permitted to be exported. There was more than 50 lakh metric tonnes of rice lying with the rice millers and the farmers in Andhra Pradesh. What to do with that rice when there is no storage capacity? FCI will not purchase it and the millers will purchase it from the farmer only for Rs.200 less than the MSP. The net effect is that in this season the farmers of Andhra Pradesh have lost Rs.1500 crore. That is the reason why they committed suicides.

On the contrary, there are occasions when they transferred the wheat from Punjab to the godowns of Andhra Pradesh, where there is no consumption of wheat, only with a view to vacate the godowns in Punjab. We have not raised our voice as high as they have done. I think in this House the only solution is to raise the voice as much as one can and only then one will be able to get things done. ...(*Interruptions*) Sir, it is very unfortunate. I am only speaking from my heart.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please put your question.

DR. K.S. RAO : Another pathetic thing is that in the name of first-come-first-served, even that 10 lakh metric tonne was not given to any of the rice millers or traders or farmers in Andhra Pradesh.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please put your question to the Minister.

DR. K.S. RAO : I am doing that, Sir. They have given it to traders who are not connected with the export of rice. And they are now trying to black-market it, charging from the farming community in Andhra Pradesh. What I would request the hon. Minister to do is to increase the capacity of the godowns in Andhra Pradesh from five lakh tonnes to at least 25 lakh tonnes.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Rao, please conclude.

DR. K.S. RAO : I would also request him to release further 20 lakh metric tonnes of export order under OGL, not first-come-first-served basis. The hon. Minister is a man of integrity, I know him. At least people like him. He must come forward, take the initiative and impress upon the Government of India and see that this 20 lakh tonnes as well as 10 lakh tonnes is permitted under OGL so that the farmers can be benefited; and also increase the capacity of godowns in Andhra Pradesh to 25 lakh tonnes.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): Sir, in today's discussion some important points were raised by the hon. Members especially on issues in Punjab and Andhra Pradesh.

Punjab is one of the States which produce the largest quantity of food grains especially paddy and wheat. Andhra Pradesh produces large quantities of paddy. In the case of Punjab and Haryana we have taken special care when allotment of godowns was made. Apart from the new PEC scheme which we started two years back, Punjab has a total covered

capacity of 70.88 lakh tonnes.

It has a capped capacity of 10.65 lakh tonnes. The total is 81.53 lakh tonnes. As of now, the stock held – both in the covered and in the capped godowns – is 75.48 lakh tonnes. Compared to the previous years, we have taken special care so that more food grains, especially wheat go out of Punjab to the consuming States of Maharashtra and Gujarat.

I have got the data. In 2008-09, in Punjab, the procurement was 184.97 lakh tonnes. What has been moved out in 2008-09 was 119.28 lakh tonnes. In 2009-10, the procurement was 200 lakh tonnes, which is both wheat and rice together; and what has been moved out is 153.06 lakh tonnes. Compared to the previous years, this year, the procurement was more. It was to the tune of 188.43 lakh tonnes; and we have moved out 165.88 lakh tonnes.

But still, Punjab has to send out more food grains. But the present situation is that the States like Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan also started producing more. So, we have to procure wheat from these States also and they also have to be stored. There is a lot of pressure from Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. We are trying to balance the situation. I understand the problem raised by the hon. Member. But compared to the previous years, we have moved out more wheat from Punjab. ...(*Interruptions*) I, myself, have discussed with the hon. Chief Minister and the hon. Food Minister and Agriculture Minister of Punjab. ...(*Interruptions*)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : बैठ जाइए।

PROF. K.V. THOMAS: I have sent a special team to Punjab. ...(*Interruptions*)

Sir, at least the hon. Members should give me time to express what is actually happening there. ...(*Interruptions*)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : मंत्री जी को जवाब देने दीजिए, पहले जवाब सुन लीजिए, उसके बाद बोलिए।

...(*Interruptions*)

PROF. K.V. THOMAS: We have taken a very special care of Punjab. ...(*Interruptions*)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : कृपया बैठ जाइए। मंत्री जी जवाब दे रहे हैं।

â€¦(*व्यवधान*)

PROF. K.V. THOMAS: The Punjab Chief Minister has met the hon. Prime Minister and the hon. Prime Minister has directed me. About two weeks back, I had a discussion with the officers and the Ministers of Punjab. We have to manage the entire country as a whole. Fortunately, the production has gone up. The MSP has gone up. This is not a small issue. Within five years, the MSP has been doubled; bonus has been given. That is one of the reasons why the procurement has gone up.

Hon. Members were telling about the buffer norms. There are no maximum buffer norms; there are only minimum buffer norms. This is again decided depending on the season and the availability on quarter to quarter basis – whether there is availability, the quantity that is to be procured; it also depends on how much we have to give to the States. So, the buffer norms depend on season to season and productivity. That is why, there are higher buffer norms. There have been seasons when buffer norms have come down; there have been seasons when buffer norms have gone up. This is one of the reasons.

श्री कौशलेन्द्र कुमार (नालंदा): मंत्री जी जवाब थोड़ी दे रहे हैं...(*व्यवधान*)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : अभी मंत्री जी को जवाब देने दीजिए। उसके बाद आपको जो पूछना है, पूछ लीजिए।

â€¦(*व्यवधान*)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : मंत्री जी के अलावा किसी और माननीय सदस्य की कोई बात रिकार्ड में नहीं जायेगी।

...(*व्यवधान*) *

PROF. K.V. THOMAS: Hon. Members should be patient enough to hear me. I have listened to them patiently. I am discussing with the State Government, the Chief Minister of Punjab. Recently, five special teams were sent to Punjab to see the situation there. A senior officer of the level of Executive Director has been posted at Punjab. Even today we have no problem in accepting rice from Punjab. As on 1.7.2011 FCI had a vacant covered storage capacity of 8.1 lakh tonnes against which only 3.35 lakh tonnes has been delivered by the millers of Punjab. So, even today we have no problem in accepting rice from Punjab but I understand their problem with regard to wheat. Punjab wants that all the wheat produced should be moved out of Punjab but we have also to look at UP, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and other States which have also started

producing wheat. Sir, I assure the hon. Member that we will take all steps to see that no food grains rot in any State.

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : कृपया आप बैठ जाइये।

â€¦(व्यवधान)

PROF. K.V. THOMAS: With regard to damage to food grains, I wish to bring to the attention of the House that due to strong measures taken by the Government of India during the last five years the damage has come down. In 2005-06, in the case of FCI the damage was 95.075 tonnes which came down to 25,253 tonnes in 2006-07. Last year it was 6,137 tonnes....(Interruptions)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : मंत्री जी के अलावा किसी और माननीय सदस्य की कोई बात रिकार्ड में नहीं जायेगी।

...(व्यवधान) *

PROF. K.V. THOMAS: We should not be carried away by Media propaganda. I have got the data which I am placing before the House. The damage to Food grains in the FCI godown, which was 2.5 per cent five years back, has come down to 0.07 per cent. I am placing the data, which I have got, before the House and if we have any doubt we can verify it. What I am saying is we are taking all measures. All the FCI godowns are computerised and every day I get data with regard to the stock position of each of the godown.

Coming to the PEC scheme, we have decided 152.9 lakh tonnes to be created by 2013. Each State has been allocated godowns based on certain norms. For the procuring State, the norm is their three years procurement and for the consuming State the norm is their four months need of the PDS. My friend, Shri K.S. Rao has a genuine complaint because when we first allotted 70 lakh tonnes to Punjab it was on the basis of this norm. In Punjab the procurement is done by the Government agency and hence we have got the data. We, therefore, allotted them 70 lakh tonnes. In the case of Andhra Pradesh procurement of paddy is done by the millers and not by the Government. In Andhra Pradesh the direct procurement by the Government and the FCI is very small. I had a discussion with the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, in the presence of Members of Parliament representing Andhra Pradesh, and we decided to increase the capacity of Andhra Pradeshâ€¦.

DR. K.S. RAO : By at least 30 lakh tonnes.

PROF. K.V. THOMAS: I would not assure 30 lakh tonnes but adequate quantity will be given to Andhra Pradesh in two forms. Under the PEC Scheme, we will allot some quantity, out of 153 lakh tonnes which is with us, to Andhra Pradesh, as we allot to U.P. and Rajasthan.

A new Silo Scheme is coming up. The Cabinet and the eGoM have agreed to create 2 million tonnes of Silos in the country. We are formulating a scheme as to how much Silos should be for States like Punjab, Andhra Pradesh or for that matter for every State. The Planning Commission has formulated a scheme and within a short period we will be able to implement it. Experiments are going on. For example, I was in Punjab and there I have seen Silos. It has been a success story. The Punjab Government has taken initiatives. We are discussing the situation about Punjab. We are in constant touch with the Punjab Government. I have attended four zonal meetings. Later, we called the producing and consuming States separately. We are in discussion with these States to find out the solution.

As regards rice, which will be produced in Punjab in the coming season, I can assure you that the FCI will be able to procure it and send it to the other parts of the country.

As far as Andhra Pradesh is concerned, it has got a genuine problem. There is excess production of rice. We are in discussion with the Government of Andhra Pradesh. The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and my colleagues here have represented that some quantity of food grains should go out of Andhra Pradesh. So far, we are not allowing the export of either parboiled rice or the non-basmati rice. We are allowing only basmati rice. As some representations came from States like Andhra Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana, we have decided to allow export of 10 lakh tonnes of non-basmati rice. Unfortunately, it went into the legal battle. We are finding out what we can do.

DR. K.S. RAO (ELURU): What about the basmati rice?

PROF. K.V. THOMAS: I am talking about non-basmati rice, not basmati rice. It went into some legal battle. We are pressurizing the Ministry of Commerce to settle the things.

Then, there is another proposal, which has come from Punjab and Haryana that some quantity of wheat has to go out. We

are examining the entire distribution. The country like India has two problems. One is we have to supply food grains to the States under the PDS. Fortunately, the off-take of the food grains in the PDS has gone to 95 per cent. Two years back, it was only 75 per cent. Now, the off-take in the States has gone up to 95 per cent in the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS). But there are 150 lakh tonnes, which we have allocated to the States under a special scheme. We have given 50 lakh tonnes to the States as per direction of the Supreme Court. We had accepted the verdict of the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court desired to allocate 50 lakh tonnes to the 170 poorest districts. We have told the Supreme Court that 50 lakh tonnes is with you but till date only 4 lakh tonnes been lifted. So, we are already releasing 150 lakh tonnes to the States. This is the situation.

We are taking all precautions so that our farmers, who have given a good production, get a better price. All their products should be procured.

In the case of implementing the MSP, it is the duty of the State Governments to implement it. Fortunately, I visited a *mandi* in Punjab. There I found that farmers are getting MSP. I do not have any complaint about that. But when I went to Andhra Pradesh, there were complaints. I have discussed it with the State Government. For more storage, Rs.2000 crore has been earmarked under the NABARD. The States are free to make use of Rs.2000 crore and construct the godowns from the village level to the *taluka* level. So, I can assure the House that we will take all the steps to ensure that not even a single food grain is lost.

Coming back to further exports, the States have requested that some quantity of wheat should be exported and some more quantity of non-basmati rice should also be exported. This is before the EGoM and we will take a proper decision...(*Interruptions*)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : किसी की बात रिकॉर्ड में नहीं जाएगी।

...(व्यवधान) *

(Placed in Library, See No. LT 5100/15/11)