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Title: Need to augment storage capacity of FCI.

SHRIMATI BOTCHA JHANSI LAKSHMI (VIZIANAGARAM): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to raise a matter of urgent public importance regarding the urgent need to augment the storage capacity of the Food Corporation of India.

Sir, we all know that 1,346.33 tonnes of food grains accrued as damaged and non-issuable in the Food Corporation of India during 2011-12 upto 1st November, 2011 due to various reasons, which includes the grains damaged because of pests, leakage and other causes during transportation.

Many food experts say these damages can be minimized, if we can have sufficient storage capacity. Officially, a total of 62.8 million tonnes of storage capacity – FCI's 33.3 million tonnes and 29.5 million tonnes in States – was available for storing the country's food grains against the stock of 51.7 million tonnes as on 1st October, 2011.

But the storage capacity is well dispersed among the States and is not as per the States' requirement, especially in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab. For example, in Andhra Pradesh, the present FCI storage capacity is 36 lakh tonnes, whereas the production of food grains is to the tune of 130 lakh tonnes.

I appreciate the Government's efforts for building up food grain storage capacity in PPP mode with the challenge of high real estate prices. The norms are also revised in favour of private partner to encourage new entrepreneurs.

In the light of the Food Security Bill, I would request the Government to augment the storage capacity of FCI as per the requirements and needs of States for effective PDS and food security.