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Title: Need to provide adequate warehouses for foodgrains in the country.

SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY (DHENKANAL): According to a recently concluded ASSOCHAM-Yes Bank joint study, presently, the storage facility deficit of India stands at 35 million tonnes. There is lack of professional and proper storage facilities for agricultural produce. Only 12 per cent of the national storage capacity accounts for agricultural produce. It has been reported that grain is stored in an unprofessional manner in open areas with little or no protection from rodents, birds and adverse weather conditions, rendering portions of the stock unfit for human consumption.

In the light of the stand taken by India at the World Trade Organization, I would like to draw the attention of the government through you towards the poor food storage facilities in the country resulting in massive wastage of food. 20-30 per cent of our grains, fruits and vegetables are annually wasted, which would ideally feed one-third of our total population.

In August 2013, the former Agriculture Minister had pegged the annual loss due to wastage at Rs. 44,000 crores. This amounts to 38% of our current food subsidy (1.15 lakh crores).

Hence, I request the government to take steps to ensure expansion of agricultural warehouse capacity in the country. This will also solve the problem of glut and scarcity by maintaining an uninterrupted supply of good quality agricultural commodities. More importantly, keeping in mind the current monsoon and drought situation in the country, the Government needs to put in place a mechanism to prevent grains in Food Corporation of India Warehouses from becoming unfit for human consumption.