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Title:Demand to allocate adequate quantity of rice to the state of Tamil Nadu under Public Distribution System.

SHRI T.R. BAALU (MADRAS SOUTH): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I want to raise a most important matter pertaining to the short supply of rice in the public distribution system in Tamil Nadu. The off-take to the public distribution system in Tamil Nadu is 2 lakh tonnes per month whereas we are getting 1.09 lakh tonnes per month from the Common Pool. So, there is a gap of 91,000 tonnes. To procure this 91,000 tonnes of rice, we have to go to the market. We have to spend a lot of money to procure this. Already there is a subsidy to the tune of Rs.1,256 crore to the public distribution system. Also, the Central Government has already fixed Rs.50 per quintal over and above the support price. The Government is overburdened. That is why, the hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has written to the hon. Food Minister on 14th February, 1999 explaining all these reasons. So, I request the hon. Food Minister to kindly allocate 1.65 lakh tonnes as originally allocated so that the public distribution system could be somewhat managed.

I request the hon. Food Minister to kindly see that proper supply is made. I request the hon. Parliamentary Affairs Minister, Shri Ram Naik, to react on this most important matter of extra allocation of rice to the public distribution system in Tamil Nadu.

Sir, the Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Shri Ram Naik is sitting here. I request him to respond to this matter.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I cannot compel the Minister to respond.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Baalu, how can I compel him to respond?

SHRI RAM NAIK : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I am ready to respond. But Shri Somnath Chatterjee should again appreciate that it is not a selective response.

Sir, I would draw the attention of the Food Minister to the matter raised by Shri T.R. Baalu and request him to respond to his request separately.