

YADAV : (a) to (c) Government constantly reviews the stock position of foodgrains in the Central Pool, vis-a-vis, the prescribed buffer stock norms, production of foodgrains in the country, trend of procurement, requirement for the public distribution system and other welfare schemes, open market prices, etc. and decision to import foodgrains is taken depending upon the overall situation. Due to untimely rains during the sowing season, the Ministry of Agriculture have initially estimated the likely production of wheat during the current 1997-98 rabi season at 64.51 million tonnes as against 69.27 million tonnes produced last year. Government, after reviewing the status of wheat production during 1997-98, decided to import upto 20 lakh tonnes of wheat during 1998-99 to augment its availability in the country for keeping the prices under control. The STC has already contracted for import of 15 lakh tonnes of wheat from Australia at the rate of US \$ 142.50 FOB per tonne. The estimated total cost of 15 lakh tonnes of wheat works out to US\$ 214 million (approximately Rs. 855 crores @ US \$ 1=Rs.40).

(d) Yes, Sir

(e) Wheat is procured by the Government under price support scheme. Under the price support scheme, all the quantities of wheat conforming to the prescribed specifications offered for sale by the farmers are purchased by the Government/Government agencies at minimum support price/procurement price fixed by the Government. The minimum support price (MSP) is fixed by the Government on the recommendation of the Commission for Agriculture Costs and Prices (CACPC), which, while recommending MSP takes into consideration the cost of production of wheat and a reasonable margin of profit to the farmer. MSP of wheat fixed for the rabi marketing season 1998-99 is Rs 455 per quintal. In addition to this, Government has announced a bonus of Rs. 55 per quintal for the wheat offered for sale to the procurement agencies during the period 1.4.98 to 10th June, 1998. The farmers are free to sell their produce to the government and their agencies at the MSP/procurement price fixed or in the open market at whatever price they can get. Thus, interest of farmers is not adversely affected by the decision to import wheat which is resorted to, to augment its availability in the country on account of shortfall in production etc.

(f) to (j) Against the decision taken by the Government to import upto 20 lakh tonnes of wheat during 1996-97, STC contracted for import of 16.75 lakh tonnes of wheat from Australia, Canada and Argentina. Of this, 13.25 lakh tonnes of wheat was contracted for import from Australia during 1996-97. The entire contracted quantity of wheat for import during 1996-97 has already arrived.

(k) The imported wheat is added to the Central Pool. Stocks of wheat in the Central Pool including the imported wheat is being utilised for meeting the requirement of Public Distribution System/Other Welfare Schemes on a regular basis in non wheat growing areas. FCI is receiving imported wheat ships at Cochin, Mangalore, Tuticorin, Chennai Pondicherry, Kakinada, Vizag, J.N.P. (Mumbai) and Kandla Ports and storing the stocks in the FCI depots of South Zone

and Maharashtra and Gujarat for issue for PDS and other Government Schemes.

(l) Against the decision taken by the Government to import upto 20 lakh tonnes of wheat during 1998-99, STC has contracted for import of 15 lakh tonnes. The entire contracted quantity is being imported.

(m) Does not arise.

Skin Diseases due to use of Cosmetics

2074. SHRI JAGAT VIRSINGH DRONA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the excessive use of various cosmetics, soaps, shampoos in the modern society is the main cause for various skin-diseases;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to take any steps in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): (a) As per available information, there is no report indicating that the use of cosmetics, soaps and shampoos is the main cause of skin diseases.

(b) and (c) Standards for shampoos, soaps and other Cosmetics are drawn by Bureau of Indian Standard after taking into consideration the safety aspect of Chemicals used and the manufacturers are required to ensure the dermatological safety of their formulations before releasing the product to the market for sale.

Safety of Workers in Mines

2075. SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are considering seriously on the matter of safety in mines;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures proposed to be taken by the Government for the safety of workers in mines?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) to (c) Provisions for safety of persons employed in mines are already contained in the Mines Act, 1952, and the Rules and Regulations framed thereunder. The Directorate General of Mines Safety also issues guidelines in the form of circulars to the management for improving safety measures. These provisions are required to be complied with the mine managements. The officers of the Directorate General of Mines Safety inspect the mines periodically to oversee the status of compliance with the safety provisions, and take action as provided for under the Mines Act, 1952, in case of default.

Besides the legislative measures, the Government is promoting safety through a number of other initiatives, such as:

- (a) conferences on safety in mines;
- (b) self-regulation by managements;
- (c) workers' participation in safety management;
- (d) tripartite and bipartite reviews at various levels;
- (e) training of work persons;
- (f) observance of safety week and safety campaigns; and
- (g) national safety awards (Mines).

Supply of Foodgrains to Mills

2076. SHRI MOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Food Corporation of India had purchased foodgrains from Punjab since 1995 upto now and sold it to mills at cheaper rates;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the losses suffered by the F.C.I. as a result thereof;

(d) whether the Government have conducted any inquiry in this regard; and

(e) if so, the action taken or proposed to be taken against the guilty officers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV) (a) to (c) The quantities of foodgrains procured and sold by FCI in Punjab during 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 are given in the Statement enclosed.

Besides, a quantity of 7.44 lakh tonnes of paddy procured in 1994-95, has been sold by FCI in the open market upto June, 1997. No quantity was specifically sold to the millers exclusively. In the process of open sale, if the millers had been in the fray, they would have availed the same rate as that of other bidders/ buyers.

(d) and (e) Based on some press reports, the Hon'ble High Court of Punjab & Haryana admitted, suo-moto, a Public Interest Litigation (No. 915/97) where it was alleged that certain irregularities were committed in the Open Market Sale Scheme of wheat. In pursuance of the directions of the Hon'ble High Court, given on 25.7.97, the matter was investigated by the Deputy Commissioners of Punjab and Haryana and based on their reports, C.B.I. pursued the matter and 13 F.I.Rs. have been lodged by C.B.I. so far.

Statement

Quantities of Foodgrains procured by FCI in Punjab Since 1995

Year	(in lakh tonnes)		
	Wheat	Paddy	Rice Levy
1994-95	23.89	27.45	0.09
1995-96	22.83	17.58	0.41
1996-97	16.64	17.18	7.88
1997-98	14.97	29.11	13.04
1998-99	18.12		
	(upto 1.6.1998)		

Quantities of Foodgrains Sold by FCI in Punjab since 1995

Year	(in lakh tonnes)	
	Wheat	Rice
1994-95	3.25	0.25
1995-96	7.69	0.36
1996-97	(*) 5.32	0.26

(*) In addition to this 8.75 lakhs tonnes of wheat was issued to different buyers under Punjab Special Scheme.

Central Assistance for Primary Health Centres

2077. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK:
SHRI SATNAM SINGH KAINTH:
SHRI RAMPAL UPADHYAY:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Primary Health Centres and sub-Centre and Family Planning Centres opened in each State during the Ninth Plan till date;

(b) whether the Government emphasised the common minimum programme to increase the number of Primary Health Centres and sub-centres likely to be set up state-wise during 1998-99;

(c) whether the Government proposed to grant/provide special assistance to each State for setting up of sub centres;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT