

Enough Stock of Food-grains in the Country to Meet Exigencies

August 8, 2011: The government has enough stock of food-grains in the central pool to meet the exigencies. The stock position of wheat and rice in central pool as on 1st July 2011 was 640.06 lakh tons comprising of 371.49 lakh tons of wheat and 268.57 lakh tons of rice. Prof. KV Thomas, union minister of state having independent charge of consumer affairs, food and public distribution state this in rajya sabha in reply to a member question from Mr. Parimal Nathwani.

In accordance with the details put up in the house by the minister, maximum stock of 228.19 lakh tons food-grains in the central pool lies in Punjab whereas Arunachal Pradesh held the minimum stock of only 0.04 lakh tons of food-grains. The storage of food-grains in Jharkhand under the central pool was 1.13 lakh tons while the same in Gujarat was 7.51 lakh tons.

The minister also stated that the record procurement of rice and wheat during the last three years and the current year; as well as the consequent surplus stock of food-grains in the central pool resulted in a storage gap. Government has formulated a scheme for construction of storage godowns through private entrepreneurs, central and state warehousing corporations to augment storage capacity; he said and added that a capacity of about 152.97 lakh tons was to be created under the scheme.

In response to another question on the same subject from Mr. Nathwani, the minister informed that in the eleventh five year plan an allocation of Rs. 154.82 Crore was made to FCI for construction of storage which was likely to result in the construction of about 1.2 lakh tons capacity. He said that government was facing shortage of covered storage space and hence food-grains were stored in CAP (cover and plinth).

The government recently allowed export of 10 lakh tons of non-Basmati rice from private account which would not have direct impact on the central pool stock and hence on government storage; the minister said and added that due to the decision to export some quantity of rice which would have otherwise come to the government stocks would now be exported and would ease the storage problem to that extent.

