

Rice prices up 9% as kharif output dips

Our Bureau
Mangaluru

The price of rice has gone up by over 8 per cent since January following a decline in kharif production, the Union government told the Rajya Sabha today.

Replying to a question in the Rajya Sabha on Friday, Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, said the production of rice is likely to be lower compared with last year due to deficient rainfall in some rice-growing States such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal.

The monthly average wholesale price of rice increased to ₹3,999 a quintal in November (provisional) against ₹3,675 a quintal in January, recording a growth of 8.81 per cent.

He said the Government has been taking various measures from time to time to augment domestic avail-



ability and stabilise prices of essential food commodities, including rice, to make them accessible to all the consumers across India at affordable prices.

The Government had 204.67 lakh tonnes (lt) of rice stock in Central pool as on October 1 against stocking norms of 102.50 lt.

HEAT-RESISTANT CROP

Replying to a separate question, Tomar said the government aims to promote the use of heat-resistant wheat varieties amongst the farmers through public and private partnership and providing seed directly to

Production of rice suffered due to deficient rainfall in some key rice-growing States thus driving the prices up

the farmers. Asked if several heat-tolerant varieties of wheat such as PBW 803, DBW 187 and DBW 222 can tolerate high temperatures and produce normal yields compared to local variety of HD-3086, the Minister said DBW 187 and DBW 222 have been found superior over HD-3086 as far as heat tolerance is concerned.

During the crop season 2021-22, the varieties DBW 187 and DBW 222 have shown heat tolerance with yield gain of 3.6 per cent and 5.4 per cent, respectively, as against HD-3086.

He said the variety PBW 803, developed by the Lud-

hiana-based Punjab Agricultural University, is suitable for irrigated timely sown condition and resistant to brown rust as well as moderately resistant to stripe rust.

This variety is not recommended as heat-tolerant variety, he said.

LSD OUTBREAK

To a question on the outbreak of lumpy skin disease (LSD) in cattle, Parshottam Rupala, Union Minister for Animal Husbandry and Dairying, said the disease is presently under control.

Around 29.45 lakh cases of LSD have been reported in the country during 2022. However, the number of LSD cases was around 112 and 9,817 in 2021 and 2020, respectively.

Stating that vaccination of the cattle is underway, he said around 6.25 crore animals have been vaccinated already. Around 1.55 lakh animals died due to LSD, he said.