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FOOD CORPORATION OF INDIA

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PRESS RELEASE

FCI braces to implement historic Food Security Ordinance

New Delhi, July 23: The Food Corporation of India (FCI) today said it is fully prepared to implement the National Food Security Ordinance, the world's largest food security net ever launched by a country.

"As on July 1 this year, total stock of wheat and rice available is 74 million tonnes. Of this, rice accounts for 32 million tonnes and wheat 42 million tonnes. We have sufficient stocks available in the Central Pool to meet the requirement of foodgrains for implementation of the National Food Security Ordinance," FCI Chairman & Managing Director Shri C. Viswanath said.

On July 3, the government promulgated an Ordinance that guarantees the country's two-third population the right to 5 kg of rice/ wheat / coarse cereals per month per person at a fixed price of Rs 3/ 2/ 1 respectively. Reports indicate that the total requirement of foodgrains under the scheme will be 61 million tonnes per annum.

"The implementation of the landmark Ordinance will throw a number of challenges such as availability of rice and wheat, financial provisions, manpower requirement and storage and movement of foodgrains. We are fully prepared to meet the challenges and make it a success," Shri Viswanath pointed out.

"For a comfortable availability of foodgrains, the Green Revolution being planned by the Agriculture Ministry in the eastern parts of the country must continue to be pursued vigorously because there is a greater consumption of rice and potential to increase production," he observed.

With regard to storage of foodgrains, he noted that total storage capacity under Central Pool — both covered and CAP — as on May 1 this year, was 75 million tonnes. "With this capacity, we can meet the requirement of storage of food grains under the Ordinance," he informed. "However, we are in the process of augmenting additional storage capacity under Private Entrepreneurs Guarantee Scheme. Also, a capacity of two million tonnes is planned in silos."

As for the financial implications, the FCI's working capital is likely to go up to meet the requirements of maintaining the off-take of 61 million tonnes of foodgrains with a buffer reserve of four months.

For implementing such a mammoth scheme, FCI has already embarked on a recruitment drive to meet the manpower requirement. Its sanctioned strength at



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present is 45,451 out of which the actual number of men in position is 26,716 — a shortfall of 18,735 staffers.

“We have already started a massive recruitment drive through Staff Selection Commission for Category-III level. By this year-end, at least 7000 candidates are expected to join in this category,” Shri Viswanath said. “Similarly, FCI is going to recruit 500 officers in Category-I and II. Also, recruitment of nearly 8600 personnel in Category-IV Watch and ward staff at the regional level is slated by the year-end.”

For an efficient and swift movement of foodgrains to various parts of the country that will be a critical component in the implementation of the scheme, FCI has stepped up efforts for a better synchronisation with Indian Railways. A committee, comprising representatives from Railways, Ministry of Food and FCI, has been constituted. The committee monitors the food grains movement on a weekly basis. Committees have also been constituted at the field level for better coordination.

“We have stressed upon the Railways to provide rakes for movement of food grains on a priority basis. They have also been apprised of infrastructural bottlenecks. They are taking necessary steps for up-gradation of infrastructure at platforms and railway siding godowns,” he informed.

“FCI is doing all its efforts to meet the challenges which may arise out of the implementation of the Food Security Ordinance,” he said.

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