

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1658
ANSWERED ON:07.08.2006
REGIONAL FOOD BANK
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Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is any proposal under the consideration of the Government to establish Regional Food Bank under the administrative control of SAARC Food Security Reserve Board;
- (b) if so, the present status of the said proposal alongwith the objectives thereof;
- (c) whether the modalities for the establishment of Regional Food Bank have been worked out;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the time by which the Regional Food Bank is likely to be established?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION(SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a): The 12th SAARC summit held in Islamabad, Pakistan recommended establishment of a Regional Food Bank with a view to make full use of such a mechanism. It has been decided to replace the existing SAARC Food Security Reserve (SFSR) with SAARC Food Security Bank(SFSB).

(b), (c), (d) & (e): The Concept Paper on SAARC Food Security Reserve Bank (SFSB) prepared by India, was considered during the Tenth Meeting of the SARRC Food Security Reserve Board (SFSR), held at Dhaka, in October 2004 and revised on the basis of comments received by the member countries. The 13th Summit held in Dhaka in November 2005 decided that the already existing SAARC Food Security Reserve Board may meet early to consider the revised Concept Paper prepared by India. Following this, an Inter-Governmental Expert Level Meeting may be convened to elaborate an Agreement for the establishment of a Regional Food Bank. This may than be submitted for consideration by the meeting of the SAARC Food/Agriculture Ministers. India has offered to hold the 11th Meeting of the SAARC Food Security Reserve Board and the dates are yet to be announced.

The objectives of the SAARC Food Security Bank (SFSB) would be:

- (i) to act as a Regional Food Security Reserve ;
- (ii) to provide regional support to national food security efforts;
- (iii) to improve agricultural trade facilitation measures; and
- (iv) to foster inter-country partnerships.

To maintain disease free output, the Bank would enable countries to collaborate on issues relating to trans-boundary diseases, management of environment and on sustainable improvement in food productivity in each country.