**Did the overnight ban smash the Sri Lankan paddy farmers?**

**Evidence from chemical fertilizer policy reforms**

## **SS Niwarthana1\*, M Thibbotuwawa2, HSR Rosairo1**

### 1 Department of Agribusiness management, Sabaragamuwa university of Sri Lanka

*2Institute of policy studies of Sri Lanka, Colombo 7*

\*Corresponding author: sniwarthana15@gmai.com

The overnight ban immediately disrupted the fertilizer supply which is procured as major raw material in paddy cultivation in Sri Lanka. As such, farmers had been pushed to the status of confusion and been insecure to overcome the loss of production. As the substitution for continued agriculture operations, the nation was widely pushed to organic fertilizers over months. This study aims to analyze the rice value chain focusing on major challenges faced by paddy farmers during 2021/22 Maha season due to the chemical fertilizer ban using porter’s value chain analysis model.The survey was conducted in four districts namely Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Kaluthara and Kurunegala with 406 paddy farmers whereas FGDs and KIIs have existed for other stakeholders. The lack of adequate raw materials for organic fertilizers, quality issues and no proper organic subsidy program were key constraints identified in the study. Moreover, the reduction of harvest, low profit, market price fluctuations, government unsystematized price control, black market conditions and artificial shortage by hoarding were reasoned for to temporary drop of maintaining efficient rice value chain in the country. The worst knowledge of organic farming techniques and adverse market opportunities happening in the society were threatening to current agricultural operations and should be mitigated them to implement the organic farming conversion as feasible. However, the supply of quality fertilizers, implementing advanced farming methods, developing farmer base and value-added product flow regards to organic would be wide future opportunities to meet. Therefore, sufficient fertilizers to secure harvest and favorable floor prices are much needed to ensure the national rice production process alive, and will strengthen the paddy farmers’ living conditions in order to establish the sustainable rice value chain in Sri Lanka.

**Keywords:** fertilizer ban, fertilizer policy framework, supply shortage, value chain analysis

**Acknowledgement**: The author gratefully acknowledges to Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka and external supervisor, Dr.Manoj Thibbotuwawa for facilitating to join the research project which was funded by USAID under the Innovation Lab for Food Security Policy, Research, Capacity and Influence (PRCI) program.