

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1344

ANSWERED ON:27.10.2008

BLACKMARKETING OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES

Chowdhury Shri Adhir Ranjan;Prasad Shri Hari Kewal;Renge Patil Shri Tukaram Ganpatrao;Singh Shri Uday

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether black-marketing, hoarding and shortage of essential commodities in Public Distribution System (PDS) have been identified as the major causes for shortage and price rise of these commodities;

(b) if so, whether the Government has directed the States to check black-marketing and hoarding of the essential commodities and to ensure adequate supply of these items through PDS; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon indicating number of raids conducted in this regard and action taken against those found guilty?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH)

(a),(b) & (c): The TPDS is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central Government and the State/UT Governments. The Government of India carries out procurement of foodgrains for the TPDS, their storage, transportation and allocation to the States/UTs. The responsibilities for allocation of foodgrains within the concerned State/UT, identification of eligible BPL & AAY families based on estimates of Planning Commission and issuance of ration cards to them and supervision of distribution of allocated foodgrains to eligible ration card holders through the FPS rest with the State/UT Governments. During 2002-03 to 2008-09, there was no shortage in allocation of foodgrains to State/UT Government for its distribution amongst BPL and AAY beneficiaries under TPDS.

All the State/UT Governments are required to submit monthly reports to the Central Government indicating the action taken under the provisions of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and the Prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980. The Central Government is also regularly monitoring action being taken by various States/UTs under the aforementioned two Acts. Directions have been given to States/UTs from time to time to take necessary action under both the Acts to prevent hoarding and black-marketing. States/Union Territories have also been advised strengthen their enforcement machinery to prevent malpractices in stocking and distribution of essential commodities and take necessary action against the unscrupulous persons indulging in their hoarding and black-marketing.

In order to stabilize the prices of Essential Commodities particularly wheat and pulses, the Government, by Central Order notified on 29.08.2006 under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 authorized the State Governments to prescribe stock holding limits on wheat & pulses for a period of six months, which has been further extended upto 30.04.2009. Similar orders have been issued on 07.04.2008 in respect of edible oils, edible oilseeds and rice for a period of one year and on 27.08.2008 in respect of paddy upto 30.04.2009. By virtue of these orders the State Governments/UT Administrations have been empowered to take effective action to prevent hoarding of stock of these items to ensure their availability to the common people at reasonable prices.

The action taken by States/Union Territories under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980 to check hoarding and black-marketing of essential commodities during the current year 2008 (upto 21.10.2008) as per reports received from them is summarized as under:

Under Essential Commodities Act, 1955:

No. of Raids	No. of Persons Arrested	No. of Persons Prosecuted	No. of Persons Convicted	No. of Persons Value of goods Confiscated (In Rs. Lakhs)
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193678	4792	4069	775	4743.53
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Under The Prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980

Detention orders have been passed in 117 cases during 2008 upto 21.10.2008.