

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1561
ANSWERED ON:03.08.2010
IDENTIFICATION OF BPL
Adsul Shri Anandrao Vithoba

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

- (a) whether the Union Government has decided to notify the revised poverty estimates on the basis of which States can undertake proper identification of beneficiaries under the Public Distribution System;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Union Government has also decided to use biometric technology to include eligible beneficiaries and weed out the ineligible ones; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a) to (d): Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is implemented jointly by Central and the State/Union Territory (UT) Governments with sharing of responsibilities in this regard. The Central Government has taken the responsibility for procurement, storage, transportation and bulk allocation of foodgrains to the States and UTs. The responsibilities for allocation of foodgrains within State/UT, identification of eligible Below Poverty Line (BPL) families based on estimates of Planning Commission, issuance of ration cards to them and distribution of allocated foodgrains to eligible ration card holders through fair price shops and supervision of the functioning of Fair Price Shops, etc., rest with the State/UT Governments.

Planning Commission is the nodal agency of the Government of India for estimating poverty at National and State levels. For allocation of foodgrains (wheat and rice) to States and UTs under TPDS, Department of Food & Public Distribution uses the number of BPL families based on 1993-94 poverty estimates of Planning Commission and the population estimates of the Registrar General of India as on 1st March 2000 or the number of such families actually identified and ration cards issued to them by the State/UT Governments, whichever is less. As per these estimates, the number of BPL families is 6.52 crore, which includes 2.43 crore AAY families. Allocation of foodgrains to these 6.52 crore BPL families are made @ 35 kg. per family per month.

To improve quality of delivery of services under TPDS and to assess replicability of new technologies, a pilot scheme on smart card based delivery of TPDS commodities has been approved for Chandigarh and Haryana in December, 2008. Implementing agencies of this scheme are NIC, State Government of Haryana and Chandigarh UT Administration. Under the scheme, the existing ration cards are to be replaced by smart cards. These smart cards will contain bio-metric features of the adult members of the ration card holder families.