

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1202
ANSWERED ON:16.11.2010
FREE DISTRIBUTION OF FOODGRAINS
Singh Baba Shri K.C.

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

- (a) whether the country trails behind other countries of the region in the matter of eradication of hunger and starvation;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to undertake any new, effective and concrete scheme alongwith free foodgrain distribution to overcome starvation;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

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

(a) to (e): No State Government/Union Territory Administration has reported any incidence of starvation death during last three years. However, as per Global Hunger Index (GHI) Report, 2010 released in October, 2010 by International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), GHI score for India is 24.1 while the same index scores are 20 for Nepal, 19.1 for Pakistan, 14.5 for Sri Lanka and 6.0 for China indicating that India's rank is higher than these countries. The index is a combined measure of undernourishment, underweight in children under the age of five and mortality rate of children under the age of five. The index ranks countries on a 100-point scale, with 0 being the best score (no hunger) and 100 being the worst.

There has been record food production of 234.47 million tons during 2008-09. Government has adequate buffer stock of food grains to ensure food security in the country. As on 1st November, 2010, the central pool stocks of food grains (rice & wheat) were 487.31 lakh tons against the minimum buffer stocking norms of 212.00 lakh tons.

For food security, especially of the people living below poverty line, Government allocates foodgrains at highly subsidized prices to States and Union Territories under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) for 6.52 Crore Below Poverty Line(BPL) including Antyodaya Anna Yojana(AAY) families @ 35kg per family per month. Allocations of foodgrains for APL category are also made at subsidized prices depending upon their availability in the Central Pool. Government is also implementing other welfare schemes like Mid-day-Meal (MDM) Scheme, Integrated Child Development Services Scheme (ICDS), Annapoorna Scheme, Village Grain Bank Scheme, etc.

The Government also proposes to enact the National Food Security Act to entitle by law every family below the poverty line to a certain quantity of subsidized foodgrains each month and reform Targeted Public Distribution System(TPDS). However, there is no proposal to distribute foodgrains free of cost.