

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3341
ANSWERED ON:28.07.2009
GHOST RATION CARDS
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Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a large number of ghost ration cards are in existence under the Public Distribution System (PDS);
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the said cards are being used to divert PDS foodgrains to black markets and smuggle them to neighbouring countries;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the remedial steps taken in this regard?

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),(b),(c),(d)&(e): TPDS is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and State/UT Governments. The Central Government has taken the responsibility for procurement, storage, transportation and bulk allocation of foodgrains to the State and UTs. The operational responsibilities for allocation of foodgrains within the States/UTs, identification of eligible families living below poverty line, issuance of ration cards to them and supervisions over as well as monitoring of functioning of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) rest with the concerned State/UT Government.

For identification of BPL families and issuance of ration cards to them, guidelines are to be formulated by State/UT Governments as stipulated under the Public Distribution System (Control), Order 2001. In order to maintain supplies and securing availability and distribution of foodgrains, PDS (Control), Order 2001 mandates all the States & UT Governments to issue ration cards only to eligible applicants.

For allocations of foodgrains to States and UTs under TPDS, the Department of Food & Public Distribution uses the number of BPL families based on 1993-94 poverty estimates of Planning Commission and population estimates of the Registrar General of India as on 1st March, 2000. This number of BPL families is 6.52 crore.

However, as reported by June 2009, the State and UT Governments have issued 10.86 crore BPL rations cards, (including 2.43 crore AAY cards).

In order to streamline TPDS, a 9 point Action plan is under implementation since July, 2006. As part of this action plan, State and UT Governments have been directed to continuously review lists of BPL and AAY families to eliminate bogus ration cards. As reported by 14 State Governments, 148.45 lakh ineligible ration cards have been deleted till 23.07.09 since July, 2006.

Government in addition, has asked all State/UT Governments in 2008 to initiate action against the officials/persons involved in issuance of bogus/ineligible ration cards as well as the families found in possession of such bogus/ghost cards.