

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1453
ANSWERED ON:09.08.2011
ALLOCATION OF SURPLUS FOODGRAINS
Saroj Smt. Sushila;Upadhyay Seema;Verma Smt. Usha

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

- (a) whether any proposal for one time allocation of surplus foodgrains to the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) and Below Poverty Line (BPL) card holders to deal with the problem of foodgrains storage is under consideration of the Government;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has taken any steps to ensure that the foodgrains reaches the targeted beneficiaries and are not diverted to the open market; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a) & (b): In the Writ Petition (Civil) No.196 of 2001 – PUCL v/s UOI & Others on Right to Food, the Hon'ble Supreme Court, in its order dated 14.5.2011 has directed that as a one-time measure, it is absolutely imperative in the larger public interest, to reserve 5 million tons of food grains for distribution to the 150 poorest districts or the extremely poor and vulnerable sections of our society. The Central Vigilance Committee on Public Distribution System (CVC on PDS) headed by Justice (Retd.) D.P. Wadhwa has been requested by the Hon'ble Supreme Court to identify the poorest districts or poorest segments of society and ensure that additionally allocated food grains reach this segment from time to time.

Pursuant to the above orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court and the recommendations received from the CVC on PDS, additional allocation of 2.57 lakh M.Ts of rice and wheat have been made for three months to 45 districts in the States of Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Manipur, Haryana, J&K and Rajasthan on 21st July 2011 for BPL/AAY families.

Also, considering the surplus availability of stocks of foodgrains in the Central Pool, the Government has made an adhoc additional allocation of 50 lakh tons of rice and wheat for BPL families at BPL issue prices on 16th May 2011 to all States/ Union Territories (UTs) for distribution upto March 2012.

(c) & (d): In order to maintain supplies and securing availability and distribution of essential commodities, the Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001 mandates the State Governments and UT Administrations to carry out all required action to ensure smooth functioning of TPDS. An offence committed in violation of the provisions of this Order is liable for penal action under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. It also enjoins Food Corporation of India (FCI) or any other designated agency for the purpose by the Central Government to ensure physical delivery of foodgrains to State Governments/UT Administrations for distribution under the TPDS as per allocations made by the Central Government. States/UTs shall make arrangements for taking delivery of essential commodities allocated by the Central Government by their designated agencies or nominees from the FCI depots/godowns and ensure further delivery to the fair price shop. It shall also exercise necessary checks to ensure that full quantity lifted by them reaches their godowns and in turn the fair price shops. Utilisation Certificates (UCs) for the foodgrains allocated to States/UTs are obtained regularly from them.

Strengthening and streamlining of TPDS is a continuous process. To improve functioning of TPDS, Government has been regularly issuing advisories and requesting State/UT Governments for continuous review of lists of BPL and AAY families, ensuring timely availability of foodgrains at Fair Price Shops, ensuring greater transparency in functioning of TPDS, improved monitoring and vigilance at various levels and introduction of new technologies such as computerization of TPDS operations at various levels. The Nine Point Action Plan evolved in 2006 for implementation by the States/UTs, includes continuous review of BPL/AAY lists, elimination of bogus/ineligible ration cards by State Governments/UT Administrations as well as strict action against the guilty to ensure leakage free distribution of foodgrains. Periodical interactions are also held with States/UTs.