

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5478  
ANSWERED ON:06.09.2011  
OFFICIAL STATUS OF PDS WORKERS  
Aaron Rashid Shri J.M.

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

- (a) whether the Government proposes to treat the owners of the Fair Price Shops (FPSs) being run under the Public Distribution System (PDS) as Government servants and give them salary and commission on sale of products;
- (b) if so, the details thereof indicating the number of FPS owners likely to be benefited, State-wise;
- (c) whether the Government is also mulling to hand over the responsibility of running FPSs to village panchayats, Non-Governmental Organisations and co-operative societies; and
- (d) if so, the details in this regard, State-wise?

**Answer**

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

(a) to (d): Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of Central Government and State/Union Territory (UT) Governments. The Central Government is responsible for procurement, allocation and transportation of foodgrains upto the designated depots of the Food Corporation of India. The operational responsibilities for lifting and distributing the allocated foodgrains within the States/UTs, identification of eligible Below Poverty Line (BPL) families, issuance of ration cards to them and supervision over distribution of allocated foodgrains to eligible card holders through the Fair Price Shops (FPSs) are of the State/UT Governments.

In order to maintain supplies and securing availability and distribution of essential commodities under TPDS, Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001, has been notified by the Government of India on 31st August, 2001. This order, inter-alia, provides that State Governments shall issue an order under Section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 for regulating the sale and distribution of essential commodities. The licenses to the fair price shop owners shall be issued under the said order and shall lay down the duties and responsibilities of the fair price shop owner.

There is no proposal at present to treat FPS owners as government servants. Further, since 2001, State/UT Governments have been given the flexibility in the matter of fixing the margin for the Fair Price Shops (FPSs). The rates of commission to FPS owners are, therefore, determined by the respective States/UTs.

The total number of Fair Price Shops in the country as reported by States/UTs upto 30.6.2011 are 5,05,879. States/UTs have been requested to give priority in allotment of Fair Price Shops to women's self help groups, cooperatives, village panchayats and urban local bodies. As reported by State/UT Governments upto 30.6.2011, 1,40,299 Fair Price Shops are being run by such community based organizations. State-wise details are given at Annexure.