

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3310

ANSWERED ON:23.08.2011

FOODGRAINS FOR THE POOR

Kanubhai Patel Jayshreeben; Ramshankar Dr. ; Singh Alias Pappu Singh Shri Uday

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

- (a) whether deaths due to starvation and malnutrition are on the rise in the country despite adequate availability of foodgrains in Government godowns;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor indicating the number of such cases reported during the last three years and the current year;
- (c) whether the Supreme Court has also expressed its concern on the issue and has directed the Government to issue free/cheap foodgrains to the starving poor;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto alongwith the steps taken to distribute foodgrains to the poor in all the districts; and
- (e) the scheme formulated and steps taken for eradication of starvation and malnutrition in the country?

**Answer**

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

(a)&(b): The Government is not aware of any rise in deaths due to starvation and malnutrition in the country. No State Government/Union Territory Administration has reported any incidence of deaths due to starvation and malnutrition during each of the last three years and the current year. As per the Report on 'Causes of Death - 2001-03 in India' by Registrar General of India, nutritional deficiencies are responsible for only 2.8% death of the children aged 0-4 years and 2% death of infants.

(c) & (d) The Hon'ble Supreme Court in its order dated 14.05.2011 in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 196 directed the Union of India, as a one-time measure, to reserve 5 million tons of foodgrains for distribution to the 150 poorest districts or the extremely poor and vulnerable sections of society. The Court has observed that the Order is made to ensure that no starvation deaths may take place and people can be saved from malnutrition as far as possible. As per directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court and based on the recommendations of the Central Vigilance Committee on Public Distribution System, an additional allocation of 2,57,336.67 tons of rice and wheat has been made on 21.7.2011 for three months to 45 districts in 8 States.

(e) The Government accords high priority to the overall issue of malnutrition, particularly, in respect of children, adolescent girls and women and has been implementing several schemes/programmes of different Ministries/Departments through State Governments/Union Territories (UTs). The interventions to address nutrition challenges in India mainly stem from the National Nutrition Policy and the National Plan of Action on Nutrition which envisage direct and indirect interventions.

For tackling the problem of hunger, starvation and malnutrition in the country and to ensure that people living below poverty line get adequate food grains, the Government has been providing food grains at highly subsidized prices to the targeted population through the State Governments /UT Administrations under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and Other Welfare Schemes (OWS) such as Mid-Day Meal Scheme, Wheat Based Nutrition Programme, Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (RGSEAG), Annapurna, Emergency Feeding Programme and Village Grain Bank Scheme. During 2011-12, under TPDS, a quantity of 542.28 lakh tons of food grains have been allocated to States/UTs. This includes additional allocation of 50 lakh tons of food grains made for BPL families at BPL issue prices and 2.57 lakh tons of additional allocation made to 8 States for distribution in the poorest districts as per order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court. 47.73 lakh tons of food grains have also been allocated to States/UTs for the Other Welfare Schemes.