

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:13

ANSWERED ON:22.11.2011

TASK FORCE ON PDS

Dharmshi Shri Babar Gajanan;Yadav Shri Dharmendra

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

- (a) whether the Task Force on the Public Distribution System set up under Nandan Nilekani has finalised/submitted its report to the Government;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether the said Task Force has recommended an Information Technology enabled Flexi Public Distribution System (PDS) providing option to the beneficiaries to choose between direct cash subsidy or foodgrains at their favoured location;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto alongwith the present status of implementation thereof; and
- (e) the other steps being taken to revamp, strengthen and streamline PDS?

**Answer**

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

(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF THE STARRED QUESTION NO. 13 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 22.11.2011 IN THE LOK SABHA

(a) to (e): A Task Force had been constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri Nandan Nilekani, Chairman, Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), the terms of reference of which were extended to the reforms of Public Distribution System (PDS) including an IT Strategy for PDS and an implementable solution for direct transfer of subsidies on food and kerosene. The Task Force has submitted its report to the Hon'ble Finance Minister on 02.11.2011.

The Task Force in its report has inter-alia recommended the setting up of a dedicated institutional mechanism to implement end-to-end computerization of PDS across the country called the PDS Network (PDSN). It mentions that a common software platform for PDS can be developed for all States, with the flexibility to configure policies, prices, and administrative structures. The Report inter-alia has also recommended that the software will make it possible for the State Government to decide to offer choice to the beneficiaries in receiving their entitlements in kind (food/kerosene) or cash and will make it possible to provide a choice of the location from which the beneficiary can get his/her entitlement. The Report of the Task Force is under consideration of the Government.

Strengthening and streamlining of TPDS is a continuous process. Government has regularly reviewed and has also issued instructions to States/Union Territories to strengthen functioning of Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) by improving monitoring mechanism and vigilance, increased transparency in functioning of TPDS, adoption of revised Model Citizen's Charter, use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools and improving the efficiency of Fair Price Shop operations. Detailed Guidelines on end to end Computerisation of PDS have been framed by Government of India and an institutional mechanism has been set up at the national level.