

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4318

ANSWERED ON:20.12.2011

REFORMS IN PDS

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Nana;Punia Shri P.L. ;Reddy Shri Modugula Venugopala

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

- (a) whether the Government has received suggestions from various quarters to improve the functioning of the Public Distribution System(PDS) to check damage to foodgrains and rise in prices;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto alongwith the plan formulated for improving the functioning of PDS;
- (c) whether the Union Government has also issued any instructions to the States for effective implementation of PDS;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the States thereto;
- (e) whether the Government has formulated any alternative mode for distribution of foodgrains to ensure better implementation of the proposed food laws; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

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

(a) to (f): 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 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.

Suggestions are received from time to time to improve the functioning of TPDS. Strengthening and streamlining of TPDS is a continuous process. To improve functioning of TPDS, Government has been regularly requesting State/UT Governments for continuous review of lists of BPL and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families, ensuring timely availability of foodgrains at Fair Price Shops (FPSs), ensuring greater transparency in functioning of TPDS, improved monitoring and vigilance at various levels and introduction of new technologies such as Computerisation of TPDS operations at various levels.

Further, this Department has been regularly interacting with the States for successful and effective reforms of the TPDS. Beginning with the Conference of State Food Secretaries and other officials held in July, 2010 on 'Best Practices and Reforms in TPDS', four Regional Conferences were held with State Food Ministers and Food Secretaries in February, 2011. Advisories are also being issued on regular basis to all States/UTs to take necessary corrective measures for smooth and transparent functioning of the TPDS.

As a part of reforms in TPDS, some States/UTs are issuing smart cards, food coupons, barcoded ration cards, etc for the delivery of TPDS commodities to the beneficiaries.