

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:12

ANSWERED ON:13.03.2012

COMPUTERISATION OF PDS

Adsul Shri Anandrao Vithoba;Punia Shri P.L.

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

- (a) whether the Union Government has sought information from the States regarding initiatives taken by them to computerise the Public Distribution System (PDS) with a view to fast tracking the reform process so as to check corruption, irregularities and diversion from PDS in a time bound manner;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the response of the States thereto alongwith the progress made in this regard till date and the time limit fixed for its completion;
- (c) whether the Government has decided to centrally monitor the computerisation process;
- (d) if so, the details and the objectives thereof and the steps taken thereon;
- (e) whether the Government proposes to extend the alternative schemes like biometric technology, Radio Frequency Identification System, cash for food etc. to the entire country to bring efficiency in the Public Distribution System; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof alongwith the present status of the said schemes?

Answer

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

(a) to (f): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF THE STARRED QUESTION NO. 12 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 13.03.2012 IN THE LOK SABHA

(a) to (f): All States/UTs have been requested to undertake end-to-end Computerization of Public Distribution System (PDS) on priority basis which includes Fair Price Shop (FPS) Automation, Computerisation of Supply-Chain, digitization of beneficiary database and setting up of transparency and grievance redressal mechanism and to prepare a time-bound Action Plan for end-to-end Computerization of PDS.

States/ UTs have taken up several measures towards digitization of ration cards (Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, etc.), computerised allocation to Fair Price Shops (Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Chhattisgarh, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu etc.), issuance of PDS commodities using Smart Cards/point of sale terminal (Andhra Pradesh, Chandigarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha etc.), grievance redressal (Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, etc.), use of GPS technology (Chhattisgarh, Tamil Nadu), for tracking vehicles carrying PDS commodities, SMS based monitoring (Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh etc.), and use of web-based citizen's portal (Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh etc.).

Computerization of PDS has also been taken up as a Mission Mode Project (MMP) under the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) by the Central Government. As per MMP guidelines, a dedicated institutional mechanism by way of an Empowered Committee (EC) and a Central Project e-Mission Team (CPeMT) for computerization of PDS has been set up. States/UTs have been requested to establish a two-tier structure at their level comprising a State Apex Committee as well as a State Project e-Mission Team (SPeMT).

During the Conference of Food & Agriculture Ministers of States/UTs held on 8-9th February, 2012, timelines for accomplishing identified milestones of Computerization of PDS were deliberated upon and recommended.

Vide Hon'ble Supreme Court's order dated 03.02.2012 in Writ Petition (Civil) No.196/2001, Secretary (Food & Public Distribution), Government of India has been nominated as the Chief Coordinator of computerization programme to coordinate with all the State Governments and the Union Territories and to ensure that entire computerization is carried out on a top priority basis. All the Chief Secretaries and Administrators have also been directed to fully cooperate with the Chief Coordinator and meticulously comply with his directions. In pursuance of the Hon'ble Supreme Court's directions, all States/UTs were requested to send the progress report of computerization of PDS in their respective States/UTs. Detailed directions alongwith timelines for achievement of various milestones towards Computerisation of PDS were issued to Chief Secretaries of all States / Administrators of all Union Territories on 07.03.2012

(Copy enclosed as Annexure).

There is no specific proposal for use of Radio Frequency Identification System. As regards cash for food, a draft scheme on transfer of food subsidy in cash instead of distribution of foodgrains and sugar to Below Poverty Line / Antyodaya Anna Yojana beneficiaries under PDS on pilot basis is under consideration.