

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1062
ANSWERED ON:20.03.2012
IMPLEMENTATION OF PDS
Ananth Kumar Shri

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

- (a) whether there are reports that widespread hunger and malnutrition have resulted from lack of proper implementation of universal Public Distribution System;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto alongwith the corrective steps taken in this regard;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to initiate a fresh policy in this regard to overcome the lacunae in the present system; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

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

(a)to(d): 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), Annapurana, Emergency Feeding Programme and Village Grain Bank Scheme.

Though there have been requests for universal PDS, Government is not considering to introduce Universal Public Distribution System as the focus on poor will get diluted. It would require procurement of huge quantities of wheat and rice which would result in less availability of foodgrains in the market, leading to rise in open market prices. If the same quantity of foodgrains is distributed equally among all, then the scale of issue will have to be reduced. Further, in order to manage the level of food subsidy, the issue prices of rice and wheat may have to be increased substantially from the present Central Issue Prices (CIPs) which have not been revised during the last nine to eleven years. This may result in BPL and AAY families getting reduced scale of foodgrains and paying higher prices.