

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2213  
ANSWERED ON:27.03.2012  
GPS TECHNOLOGY IN PDS  
Shanavas Shri M. I.

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

- (a) whether the Union Government is considering to introduce Special Purpose Vehicle for transportation of foodgrains from procuring States to consuming States and install GPS tracking system to monitor the movement of foodgrains;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government is also considering the proposal for introduction of biometric- based bar-coded ration cards to be issued to the beneficiaries under the Public Distribution System;
- (d) if so, whether the Government has launched any pilot project prior to its implementation; and
- (e) if so, the details and the outcome thereof?

**Answer**

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

(a)&(b): here is no proposal under consideration to introduce Special Purpose Vehicle for transportation of foodgrains from procuring States to consuming States and to install GPS tracking system to monitor the same. However, in order to curb leakages and diversion of foodgrains meant for distribution to the eligible beneficiaries under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), a scheme regarding installation of Global Positioning System (GPS) sets on vehicles carrying TPDS commodities for tracking the movement of such vehicles had been taken up in 2007-08 on pilot basis. State Governments of Chhattisgarh and Tamil Nadu have implemented the scheme. Subsequently, it has been decided to extend this scheme to all the States/Union Territories (UTs) in the current financial year 2011-12 and proposals have been invited from States/UTs for sanctioning funds under the scheme.

(c)to(e): All States/UTs have been requested to undertake end-to-end Computerization of Public Distribution System (PDS) on priority basis which inter-alia includes Fair Price Shop (FPS) Automation using Smart Cards, bar-coded ration cards/food coupons, etc.

To improve quality of delivery of services under TPDS and to assess replicability of new technologies, a pilot scheme on smart card based delivery of TPDS commodities was approved for Chandigarh UT and State of Haryana in December, 2008. Under this scheme, the existing ration cards are to be replaced by smart cards. These smart cards will contain bio-metric features of the adult members of the ration card holder families.

Chandigarh UT has informed that digitization of ration card forms has been completed. Point of sale terminals and electronic weighing machines have been installed at 35 fair price shops. The revised PDS application provided by National Informatics Centre (NIC) would be implemented by the first week of April, 2012. Government of Haryana has reported that digitization of beneficiaries' data of 4 pilot smart card blocks has been completed and that the Computerization of PDS is expected to be completed by June, 2013.