

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1496
ANSWERED ON:21.08.2012
UNIVERSAL PDS
Haque Shri Sk. Saidul

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken any initiative to universalise the Public Distribution System in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

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

(a) to (c): Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) was launched in 1997 with a view to specifically target poor sections of society. There is no proposal at present to universalize the Public Distribution System as the focus on poor will get diluted.

Further, procurement of huge quantities of wheat and rice to meet the requirement of Universal Public Distribution System would result in lower 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.

Also, 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 for the Below Poverty Line (BPL)/Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families since 2000 and for Above Poverty Line (APL) families since 2002. This would mean that TPDS beneficiaries would have to pay higher end retail prices of foodgrains.