

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:873
ANSWERED ON:27.11.2012
PRICES UNDER PDS
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Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) the percentage of Below Poverty Line (BPL) population in various States in the country particularly in the backward and rural regions along with the percentage of the said population as a whole;
- (b) whether the prices of foodgrains and other essential commodities in the fair price shops for the people living Above Poverty Line (APL) are almost at par with the prices in the open market;
- (c) if so, whether the Government has undertaken or proposes to undertake measures to bring down the prices of foodgrains, sugar, kerosene for the BPL and APL families under the PDS; 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 allocation of foodgrains (rice and wheat) to States and Union Territories (UTs) under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), Department of Food and Public Distribution uses the number of Below Poverty Line (BPL) families based on 1993-94 poverty estimates of Planning Commission and the population estimates of Registrar General of India as on 1st March 2000 or the number of such families actually identified and ration cards issued to them by State/UT Governments, whichever is less. As per these estimates, the number of BPL families is 6.52 crore, which includes about 2.43 crore Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families.

A statement showing State-wise percentage of BPL and AAY households covered under TPDS is at Annex-I. As per the statement, the percentage of BPL households in the country is about 36% out of which AAY comprises 13.49%.

Central Issue Prices of rice and wheat for distribution to Above Poverty Line (APL) category are Rs.8.30 per kg and Rs.6.10 per kg respectively. A statement indicating State-wise issue prices for foodgrains (rice and wheat) for APL category at Fair Price Shops (FPSs) is at Annex-II. As per information regarding retail prices of foodgrains (rice and wheat) received from Department of Consumer Affairs, price of rice in open market varies from Rs. 15.00 per kg. to Rs.31.00 per kg and for wheat it varies from Rs.12.00 per kg to Rs. 27.00 per kg. A statement of these retail prices is at Annex-III. While there is at present no proposal for downward revision of Central Issue Prices of foodgrains (rice and wheat) being distributed under TPDS, the National Food Security Bill 2011 introduced in Parliament envisages issue of foodgrains to 'Priority' households at the issue prices of Rs.3.00, Rs.2.00 and Rs. 1.00 for rice, wheat and coarse grains respectively.

As regards sugar, the Central Government, in a move towards better targeting, has restricted the supply of levy sugar under PDS to BPL including AAY families in the country except in the North Eastern States, Hill States and Island Territories where universal coverage was allowed to continue. The sugar supplied in FPS is at the rate of Rs. 13.50 per kg which is quite low compared to the price of sugar in the open market. As such, there is no proposal under consideration to bring down the price of sugar supplied under PDS.

As regards Kerosene, which is managed by Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, in order to insulate the common man from the impact of rise in international oil prices and the domestic inflationary conditions, the Government continues to modulate the Retail Selling Price (RSP) of PDS Kerosene among others, resulting in incidence of under-recovery to the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs). The RSP of PDS Kerosene has not been revised since June, 2011. Also, there is no proposal before the Government to revise the RSP of PDS Kerosene, at present.