

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3119
ANSWERED ON:08.12.2009
EXPANSION OF AAY
Reddy Shri Anantha Venkatarami

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

(a) whether the Government is taking any steps to further expand the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) by including more poor families and set up grain banks particularly in chronically food scarce and inaccessible areas; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a) & (b): Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), focused on the poor, aims at distributing subsidized foodgrains to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families in all rural as well as urban areas in the country.

Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY), a sub set of TPDS covers the poorest families among BPL category in all rural areas and urban areas. AAY was launched in December, 2000 for one crore poorest of the poor families among Below Poverty Line (BPL) families. Subsequently, this scheme has been expanded thrice to cover additional 50 lakh families each time.

Identification of eligible BPL and AAY families and issuance of ration cards to these families is the responsibilities of the concerned State/UT Governments. State/UT Governments have identified and issued ration cards to 2.43 crore AAY families.

For these 2.43 crore AAY families, foodgrains are allocated to all States & UTs @ 35 kg per family per month at a highly subsidized prices of Rs.2/- per kg for wheat and Rs.3/- per kg for rice .

There is no proposal to further expand the AAY.

Village Grain Bank scheme (VGB) was earlier implemented by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs in 11 States. Since 24.11.2004, the VGB Scheme is being implemented by the Department of Food and Public Distribution. The main objective of the Scheme is to provide safeguard against starvation during periods of natural calamity or lean season when marginalized food insecure households do not have sufficient resources to purchase rations. The Grain Banks are to be set up in food scarce areas like the drought prone areas, the hot and cold desert areas, tribal areas, and the inaccessible hilly areas which remain cut off because of natural calamities like flood, etc.

The scheme envisages inclusion of willing BPL/AAY families as members of the VGB in villages to be identified by the State Govt. in food deficit areas. Village Panchayat/Gram Sabha, Self Help Group or NGOs, etc, identified by the State Govt. are eligible for running the Grain Banks. The quantity of foodgrains to be lent, period of repayment, etc. are to be decided by the managing committee of the VGB.

Since 2005-06 Government has sanctioned Rs.121.39 crore for setting up 18506 village grains banks in 20 states.