

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6639
ANSWERED ON:07.05.2013
AVAILABILITY OF ESSENTIAL COMODITIES
Reddy Shri Magunta Srinivasulu

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

- (a) whether the non-availability of cargo service has hit the delivery of essential commodities in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken to rectify this situation;
- (c) whether the Government is considering to create a positive policy regime to ensure the comfortable availability of essential items to the consumers and good returns to the producers; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the benefits likely to accrue therefrom?

Answer

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

(a) to (d): No such specific instances have been brought to the notice of the Government. Seasonal and temporal) disruption in the supply chain of the Essential Commodities, however, cannot be denied in some part of the country.

Department of Consumer Affairs is administrating Essential Commodities Act, 1955 (EC Act, 1955); and Prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980 (PBM Act, 1980), to ensure availability of essential commodities to the consumers and to protect them from exploitation by unscrupulous traders. The Essential Commodities Act, 1955 has been amended through the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2006 which has been enacted-on 24th December 2006. With this amendment, the Central Government have pruned the list of the essential commodities to the minimum by deleting all such commodities which have no relevance in the present context and to facilitate free trade and commerce and retained only those commodities which are essential to life, or which are in the interest of farmers and the large section of people below the poverty line. The Prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act. 1980 which is being implemented by the State Governments/UT Administrations for the prevention of unethical trade practices like hoarding and black-marketing etc., empowers the State Governments to detain persons whose activities are found to be prejudicial to the maintenance of supplies of commodities essential to the community.