

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:286

ANSWERED ON:06.08.2013

IRREGULARITIES IN PDS .

Alagiri Shri S. ;Das Shri Ram Sundar;Hegde Shri Anant Kumar;Jaiswal Shri Gorakh Prasad ;Karwariya Shri Kapil Muni;M.Thambidurai Dr. ;Vishwanath Shri katti Ramesh

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

- (a) whether the Public Distribution System (PDS) in certain regions/States in the country has been affected by rampant corruption/irregularities;
- (b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto indicating the number of corruption cases including leakages, diversions and black marketing of foodgrains reported and the action taken against those held responsible during each of the last three years and the current year, State-wise;
- (c) whether the Government has issued any directives/instructions to the States to weed out corruption/diversion and to plug the loopholes in the PDS;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the States thereto; and
- (e) the steps including employment of Information Technology taken by the Government to strengthen PDS?

Answer

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

(a) to (e): Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State/Union Territory (UT) Governments wherein operational responsibilities for allocation of foodgrains within the States/UTs, identification of eligible Below Poverty Line (BPL) families, issuance of ration cards to them and supervision over and monitoring of functioning of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) rest with the concerned State/UT Governments.

There have been reports about irregularities in implementation of TPDS in certain regions/States in the country. As and when complaints are received by the Government from individuals and organizations as well as through press reports, they are sent to State/UT Governments concerned for inquiry and appropriate action. A statement indicating State-wise number of complaints on TPDS received in the department from 2010 to 2013 (upto July, 2013) is at Annexure-I.

Further, in order to maintain supplies and securing availability and distribution of essential commodities, Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001 has been notified on August 31, 2001 which mandates the State and UT Governments to carry out all required action to ensure smooth functioning of TPDS. An offence committed in violation of the provisions of this Order is liable for penal action under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. State and UT Governments have been directed in July 2006 to implement 9-point Action Plan for streamlining the working of TPDS. Utilisation Certificates (UCs) for the foodgrains allocated to State Government are obtained regularly from the State Governments.

Reports are being sought periodically from State/UT Governments regarding irregularities in TPDS and action taken on such cases by them under Clause 8 & 9 of the PDS(Control) Order, 2001. State-wise details regarding action taken by States/UTs under the said Order during the last three years and current year are at Annexure-II.

Further, instructions have been issued to States/UTs to conduct a regular review of the eligible beneficiaries and take action as per law against the families/persons found in possession of bogus/ineligible ration cards. As a result thereof, States/UTs as on 30.6.2013 have reported deletion of 381.04 lakh bogus/ineligible ration cards from July, 2006 onwards. A statement showing State-wise number of bogus/ineligible rations cards deleted by the State/UT Governments is at Annexure-III.

Government has been regularly reviewing and also issuing instructions to States/Union Territories to strengthen functioning of TPDS by improving monitoring mechanism and vigilance, increased transparency in functioning of TPDS, adoption of revised Model Citizen's Charter, use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools and improving the efficiency of Fair Price Shop operations.

Modernization of TPDS is the foremost priority of the Government as it faces challenges such as leakages and diversion of foodgrains, inclusion/exclusion errors, fake and bogus ration cards, lack of transparency, weak grievance redressal system, etc. Government has approved a Plan Scheme on End-to-End Computerization of TPDS under 12th Five Year Plan with a view to provide

infrastructure and financial support to States/UTs. Component-I of the Plan Scheme comprising activities, namely, digitization of ration cards/ beneficiary and other databases, computerization of Supply-Chain Management, setting up of transparency portal and grievance redressal mechanisms has been approved with a total cost of Rs.884.07 crore out of which Government of India's share is Rs. 489.37 crore and States/UTs share is Rs. 394.70 crore. The cost sharing between Centre and States would be on 90:10 basis for North-Eastern States, whereas for other States/UTs costs will be shared on 50:50 basis. Under the scheme, NIC is the technical partner and will provide the Common Application Software (CAS) as per State/UT specific requirements.