

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:61
ANSWERED ON:10.12.2013
IMPLEMENTATION OF NFSA
Sudhakaran Shri K.;Thomas Shri P. T.

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

- (a) the salient features and implementation status of the Scheme envisaged under the recently enacted National Food Security Act (NFSA) indicating the names of the items proposed to be included thereunder and the States which have so far agreed to roll out the Scheme along with the food items and other assistance provided to such States, so far;
- (b) whether the Government had held any consultation with/conference of Food Ministers of the States to resolve the issues relating to the implementation of the Scheme including the cost sharing formula;
- (c) if so, the details and the outcome thereof indicating the number of participant States along with the issues raised by them and the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (d) the details of steps taken/proposed to be taken including supply of foodgrains in smaller packs, to bring transparency and check diversion under the scheme?

Answer

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

(a), (b), (c) & (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF STARRED QUESTION NO. 61 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 10-12-2013 IN THE LOK SABHA

(a) The National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) inter alia provides for right to receive foodgrains at subsidized prices by persons belonging to eligible households under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS). This entitlement is extended upto 75% of the rural and upto 50% of the urban population. Persons belonging to eligible households will be entitled to receive 5 kilograms of foodgrains per person per month at subsidised prices of Rs. 3/2/1 per Kg for rice/wheat/coarse grains, provided that existing AAY households, which constitute the poorest of the poor, will continue to receive 35 Kgs of foodgrains per household per month. Besides this, the Act contains entitlements for meal to pregnant women and lactating mothers and children upto the fourteen years of age, through the ongoing Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Schemes.

So far Haryana, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Karnataka, Uttarakhand, Chhatisgarh and Sikkim have informed about their preparedness to implement the Act. Government of Punjab and Union Territory (UT) of Chandigarh have also indicated their willingness and sought foodgrains allocation under the Act. After assessing the reports of these State/UT Governments, foodgrains has been allocated so far to Haryana, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh and Delhi, as per the progress in identification of beneficiaries.

(b) & (c) A Conference of Food Ministers and Food Secretaries of States/UTs was held in New Delhi on 30th September and 1st October, 2013, to discuss various issues relating to implementation of the NFSA. All the States/UTs participated in the Conference of Food Secretaries held on 30th September, 2013 and Food Ministers of 20 States/UTs participated in the Conference of Food Ministers held on 1st October, 2013. In the conference, various implementation related issues such as evolving criteria for inclusion/exclusion and actual identification of beneficiaries, issue of fresh ration cards, door- step delivery of foodgrains, setting up of grievance redressal machinery at District and State Levels, computerisation of TPDS, creation of scientific storage capacity at various levels and assistance to States/UTs for meeting the expenditure on intra-State transportation, handling and margins to be paid to fair price shop dealers were discussed.

In pursuance of the discussions in the Conference, a Committee of select State Food Secretaries and officers of Central Government has been constituted to inter alia look into and make recommendation on assistance to States/UTs for meeting expenditure on intra-State movement, handling of foodgrains and margins paid to Fair Price Shop (FPS) dealers.

(d) Strengthening and streamlining of the TPDS is a continuous process. To improve functioning of TPDS, Government has been regularly requesting State/UT Governments for continuous review of lists of Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families, ensuring timely availability of foodgrains at FPSs, ensuring greater transparency in functioning of TPDS, improved monitoring and vigilance at various levels, use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools including End-to-end Computerisation of TPDS Operations, improving the viability of FPS operations, etc. Distribution of foodgrains under TPDS through

FPSs falls within the purview of States / UTs. Andhra Pradesh has started distribution of TPDS foodgrains like wheat, atta and sugar in small packs.

The NFSA also contains measures for reforms in TPDS, to be undertaken progressively by the Central and State Governments. These reforms inter alia include, doorstep delivery of foodgrains to the TPDS outlets, application of information and communication technology tools, diversification of commodities distributed under the Public Distribution System over a period of time etc. Provisions for transparency and accountability in TPDS which includes disclosure of records of TPDS, conduct of social audit and setting up of Vigilance Committees at the State, District, Block and fair price shop levels have also been made in the Act, besides grievance redressal mechanism at the District and State levels.