

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4135

ANSWERED ON:15.12.2009

COVERAGE OF PDS

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

- (a) the number of families provided the Above Poverty Line (APL) and Below Poverty Line (BPL) ration cards, Statewise;
- (b) whether a large number of poor people including agricultural labourers, Schedule Castes (SCs) and Schedule Tribes (STs) have not been issued the BPL cards;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor, State-wise including Delhi, indicating the number and percentage of poor people including SCs, STs and agriculture labourers who have not been issued BPL cards so far;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to issue ration cards to all the poor families;
- (e) if so, the details thereof and action including changes in income and other criteria, taken/proposed to be taken in this regard; and
- (f) the mechanism in place to monitor PDS?

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) to (e): Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), focused on the poor, is operated under joint responsibility of Central and the State/UT Governments. The 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 & monitoring of functioning of fair price shops, rest with the concerned State & UT Governments.

As provided under Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001, the State and UT Governments have to identify BPL families based on 1993-94 poverty estimates of Planning Commission accepted by the Central Government. Guidelines for identification of BPL families are to be issued by Ministries of Rural Development and Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation for Rural and Urban Areas. For taking up next round of BPL census in rural and urban areas, these ministries are yet to issue the guidelines.

Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) is meant for poorest of BPL families. Guidelines issued for identification of the AAY families, provide for identification of landless agricultural labourers, marginal farmers, potters, tanners, weavers, blacksmiths and cobblers, etc.

Foodgrains are allocated to State & UTs under TPDS for BPL (including AAY) families based on 1993-94 poverty estimates of Planning Commission and population estimates of Registrar General of India as on 1st March 2000, or number of such ration cards actually issued by State/UT Governments, whichever is less. The accepted number of BPL families for TPDS allocations is 6.52 crore, which include 2.43 crore AAY families. However, as reported by end of November, 2009, State and UT Governments have issued 10.97 crore BPL ration cards including 2.43 crore AAY cards and 13.28 crore APL ration cards. The details of these ration cards are given at Annex-I.

As provided in the PDS (Control) Order, 2001, the State/UT Governments are mandated to ensure that no eligible applicant is denied a ration card under the TPDS and also to ensure that the families so identified are really the poor. However, the details of SC, ST and agricultural labourers to whom BPL ration cards have not been issued are not available.

(f): Mechanism for monitoring TPDS has been provided under the PDS (Control) Order, 2001. To improve functioning of TPDS, Government has directed State & UT Governments to take up the following measures:

A. to strengthen monitoring and vigilance by-

- i) implementation of the Nine Point Action Plan;
- ii) taking action against those with Bogus Ration Cards; and
- iii) ensuring greater involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)/Urban Local Bodies in functioning of Fair Price Shops.

B. to ensure increased transparency in functioning of TPDS by-

- i) adoption and implementation of revised Model Citizens' Charter;
- ii) introduction of monthly certification of delivery of foodgrains at Fair Price Shops and their distribution to ration card holders;

- iii) taking up publicity-cum-awareness Campaign on TPDS; and
- iv) display of allocation of foodgrains – district and FPS wise on websites for public scrutiny.

C. to use ICT tools such as –

- i) computerisation of TPDS Operations;
- ii) pilot scheme on Smart Card based Operations in Haryana and Chandigarh;
- iii) piloting of new technologies for tracking movement of vehicles transporting TPDS Commodities, and

D. to improve efficiency of FPS operations through-

- i) doorstep delivery of foodgrains;
- ii) ensuring timely availability of foodgrains;
- iii) distribution of wheat flour/fortified wheat flour under TPDS;
- iv) allotment of Fair Price Shops to Institutions and Groups;
- v) sale of non-PDS items by FPS licensees; and
- vi) revision of commission to FPS licensees.