

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:114
ANSWERED ON:08.07.2014
BPL CARDS
Karandlaje Km. Shobha

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

- (a) whether there are reports/complaints of exclusion of a number of poor families from availing the benefits/rights under Below Poverty Line (BPL) cards, whereas many well-to-do families have been illegally issued these cards;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether the Government has issued any advisories/directives to the States to plug/overcome these anomalies for active delivery of Public Distribution System benefits to poor, and if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the States thereto; and
- (d) the other remedial steps taken to safeguard the interest of BPL card holders?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAOSAHEB PATIL DANVE)

(a) to (d): There have been reports about irregularities in the implementation of Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) in certain areas/States relating among others to identification of beneficiaries, denial of ration cards to eligible households and issuance of ration cards to those not eligible.

TPDS is operated under the joint responsibility of Central Government and State/Union Territory (UT) Governments. In terms of the PDS(Control) Order, 2001, State/UT Governments shall formulate suitable guidelines for the purpose of identification of eligible Below Poverty Line(BPL) families. The operational responsibilities for identification of eligible households and issuance of ration cards to them also rests with the State/UT Governments. Hence, as and when such complaints are received by the Government from individuals and organizations as well as through press reports, they have been sent to State/UT Governments concerned for inquiry and appropriate action.

Further, in terms of the PDS (Control) Order, 2001, State/UT Governments are to review the lists of BPL and AAY families every year for the purpose of deletion of ineligible families and inclusion of eligible families. This is a continuous process and State Governments are to periodically carry out the same.

Further, in consultation with the State/UT Governments, a Nine Point Action Plan was evolved in 2006, which inter-alia includes continuous review of BPL/AAY lists and to eliminate ineligible/bogus ration cards alongwith strict action to be taken against the guilty to ensure leakage free distribution of foodgrains. State/UT Governments were also requested to initiate penal action against the Government staff found responsible for issuing ineligible /bogus ration cards and the families/persons possessing such ration cards. Instructions have also been issued to all State/UT Governments to issue warning to the bogus ration card holders, through advertisements in the newspapers, to surrender the bogus cards. As a result thereof, since July, 2006, 30 State/UT Governments have reported deletion of 393.46 lakh bogus/ineligible ration cards upto 31.03.2014.

Strengthening and streamlining of TPDS is a continuous process. To improve functioning of TPDS, Government has been regularly issuing advisories and holding conferences wherein State/UT Governments are requested for continuous review of lists of BPL and AAY families, improving the offtake of allocated foodgrains, ensuring timely availability of foodgrains at FPSs, greater transparency in functioning of TPDS, improved monitoring and vigilance at various levels, adoption of revised Model Citizen's Charter, use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools, improving the viability of FPS operations, etc.

Further, the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013 inter-alia contains measures for reforms in TPDS to be undertaken progressively by the Central and State Governments. Provisions for transparency and accountability in TPDS, including disclosure of records of TPDS, conduct of social audit, setting up of Vigilance Committees at the State, district, block and fair price shop levels, grievance redressal mechanism at the district and State levels have also been made in the Act.