

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:335

ANSWERED ON:16.12.2014

DIGITAL RATION CARDS

Nishank Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal;Shanavas Shri M. I.

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

- (a) whether the work relating to the issuance of digital ration cards under the Public Distribution System (PDS) computerisation project has been initiated in all the States;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the benefits likely to accrue as a result thereof;
- (c) the manner in which the Government proposes to implement the scheme in the remote areas where Information Technology facilities are not available; and
- (d) whether there have been reports of delay in distribution of various items under PDS, if so, the details thereof and the corrective steps taken in this regard, State-wise?

Answer

MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAMVILAS PASWAN)

(a) to (d): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF THE STARRED QUESTION No. 335 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 16.12.2014 IN THE LOK SABHA

(a) to (c): Government has approved implementation of the scheme on End-to-end Computerisation of Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) Operations during the 12th Five Year Plan (2012-17) which comprises activities, namely, digitization of ration card/beneficiary and other databases, computerisation of supply-chain management, setting up of transparency portals and grievance redressal mechanisms. Digitisation of ration card data is expected to address challenges such as inclusion/exclusion errors, bogus/ineligible ration cards, etc. States/UTs are to issue ration cards based upon digitized data. As reported by States/UTs, the status of digitisation of ration cards as upto 30.11.2014 is at Annex-I. Under the Scheme, States/UTs may digitize the ration card data through both online and offline mechanism as per availability of Information Technology facilities, connectivity, etc. so that no problem is faced in remote areas.

(d): There have been complaints about irregularities in the functioning of the TPDS including delay in distribution of TPDS items in some States/UTs in the country. TPDS is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State/UT Governments wherein the operational responsibilities for implementation of TPDS within the State/UT rest with the concerned State/UT Governments. Therefore, as and when complaints are received by the Government from individuals and organizations as well as through press reports, these are referred to the State/UT Governments concerned for inquiry and appropriate action. A State/UT-wise statement indicating number of complaints received during the year 2013 is at Annex- II.

Strengthening and streamlining of TPDS is a continuous endeavour. To improve functioning of TPDS, Government has been regularly issuing advisories and holding meetings, conferences, etc. wherein State/UT Governments are requested for review of lists of beneficiaries, improving the offtake of allocated foodgrains, ensuring timely availability of foodgrains at Fair Price Shops (FPSs), greater transparency in functioning of TPDS, increased monitoring and vigilance at various levels, improving the viability of FPS operations, etc. National Food Security Act, 2013 also contains measures for reforms in TPDS to be undertaken progressively by the Central and State Government. These reforms inter alia include doorstep delivery of foodgrains to the TPDS outlets, application of information and communication technology tools including End-to-end Computerisation, preference to public institutions/bodies in licensing of FPSs, etc.