

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3858

ANSWERED ON:16.12.2014

PRICE OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES

Ahlawat Smt. Santosh;Chaudhary Shri Babulal;Dhotre Shri Sanjay Shamrao;K. Shri Parasuraman;Mahtab Shri Bhartruhari;Nete Shri Ashok Mahadeorao;Patole Shri Nanabhau Falgunrao;Premachandran Shri N.K.;Reddy Shri J.C. Divakar;Singh Shri Pashupati Nath

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

- (a) whether the Government has finalised the list of essential commodities, if so, the details thereof along with the steps taken to ensure their adequate supply and to control the prices;
- (b) whether reports/complaints from the States indicate that prices of essential commodities have risen on account of artificial shortages, supply/distribution bottlenecks, hoarding and black marketing and if so, the details thereof and the corrective action taken in this regard indicating the quantum of various items procured and distributed during each of the last three years and the current year;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to adopt an integrated action plan in coordination with the States to check such practices and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has finalised the modalities of the Price Stabilisation Fund, if so, the details and the salient features thereof along with the benefits likely to accrue therefrom;
- (e) whether the Government proposes to release additional foodgrains and strengthen the Public Distribution System (PDS) to control prices and if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) whether the Government proposes to provide any financial assistance to the States for supply of essential commodities to control price rise?

Answer

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

(a): Essential commodities are enlisted as per schedule given in the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 as per Annexure-I. Since 9th June 1978, the states have been delegated powers to ensure adequate supply of essential commodities at fair prices. Enforcement of the the Essential Commodities Act 1955 and the Prevention of Black Marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act 1980 is the responsibility of States/UTs. They have regularly been advised to implement the two Acts effectively. In 2014 action have been taken as per Annexure-II to contain prices of the essential commodities.

(b): No, Madam.

(c): Yes, Madam, The details are at Annexure-III.

(d): No, Madam.

(e): During the current year, the Government has allocated an additional quantity of 66.45 lakh tons of foodgrains for distribution among APL and BPL families in the States/UTs who have not implemented NFSA. The Government has also allocated a quantity of 12.85 lakh tons of foodgrains to the States for additional TPDS requirement, festivals, natural calamities etc. during the current year. In addition, a quantity of 100 lakh tons of wheat has also been approved for sale under Open Market Sale Scheme (OMSS) during the current year.

States and UTs have been requested for review of lists of beneficiaries, improving the off take 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. The National Food Security Act, 2013 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 including end to end computerisation, preference to public institutions/bodies in licensing of FPSs, etc.

(f): States are getting assistance by way of various schemes, programmes, etc. to enhance production and supply of essential commodities to ensure their fair price.