

Handing over the PDS to Panchayats and Municipalities

4176. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to hand over the PDS to Panchayats and Municipalities at local level;

(b) whether Government are examining the possibilities of handing over the PDS to Gram Samities specially organised for the purpose;

(c) whether any State Governments have experimented on an experimental basis or as a pilot project for the system expressed in (b) and (c) above; and

(d) if so, what is their experience and if not, whether Government intend to do so?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

The implementation of Public Distribution System is the joint responsibility of Central and State Governments. While the Central Government is responsible for procuring and making available, at affordable prices, PDS commodities to the States/UTs, the operational aspects of further distribution to the consumers under the PDS, including management of Fair Price Shops (FPS), are matters under the administrative jurisdiction of the State Government/UT Administration.

The issue of entrusting the management of Fair Price Shops (FPS) to the elected Panchayats and Nagar Palikas was discussed in the Conference of Chief Ministers on Basic Minimum Services held on July 4th and 5th, 1996 in New Delhi. The Conference felt that the actual running of the FPS by the elected Panchayats and Nagar Palikas need not be insisted upon.

(c) and (d) The State Government of Orissa have reported that they have taken

a decision to give priority to Gram Panchayats in appointment of retailers under PDS and distribution of rate at Rs. 2/- per kg. to BPL families and at Rs. 4/- Per kg. to BPL families through Gram Panchayats is running satisfactorily.

Decontrol and exclusion of sugar from PDS

4177. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to decontrol and exclude sugar from Public Distribution System; and

(b) whether Government would seriously consider dropping the proposal to decontrol sugar considering the fact that decontrol of sugar will lead to exorbitant price rise of sugar and create undue hardships to the people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) In the context of the recommendations of the Mahajan Committee and the consultations held with States/UTs, the matter is under examination in the Government.

Potency of Polio Vaccines Administered in the Country

4178. SHRI S. PETER ALPHONSE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether oral polio vaccines which had lost potency were administered to children in India;

(b) if so, whether Government will be able to identify those children to whom spurious vaccines were administered and take steps to revaccinate them with potent vaccine; and

(c) whether Government would come forward to order a high level enquiry regarding this spurious vaccine procured from Belgium?