

Advisory Council on PDS

6221. SHRI AHMED MOHMEDBHAI PATEL:

SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:

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

(a) whether Advisory Council on Public Distribution System urged Government that minimum employment programmes for rural areas and the women saving programmes for rural areas and the women saving programmes be targeted to alleviate poverty;

(b) whether the council has also expressed its opinion that State should implement the Scheme for delivering kerosene oil at the door steps of the wholesalers to prevent diversion to black marketeers;

(c) if so whether Central scheme for blue dyeing of kerosene meant for Public Distribution System be extended to other areas in a phased manner;

(d) if so, whether it has also suggested that revamped PDS had been successful in increasing availability of foodgrains to the deficit regions of the country;

(e) if so, what were the other suggestions made by the Advisory council on Public Distribution System; and

(f) how many of them have been fully accepted and implemented by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) to (e) The conclusions agreed upon in the meeting of the Advisory Council on PDS held on 19-2-94 are as under:—

(i) Provisions of the Essential Commodities Act should not be used for harassing the traders by launching prosecutions in case of minor discrepancies and technical deficiencies. But it

should be implemented effectively wherever gross violations are noticed. (However, the Minister (P&CS) from Uttar Pradesh stated that the Government of Uttar Pradesh has decided not to file FIRs against traders under the E.C. Act but would take action against hoarders and black marketeers under the Act). The list of essential commodities should also be reviewed in view of plentiful supply of some commodities.

(ii) The Revamped PDS Scheme has been successful in increasing availability of foodgrains in the food deficit regions of the country. Increased allocations of foodgrains at the specially subsidised rates should be given very high priority for poverty alleviation.

(iii) The scheme of delivered supply of kerosene to wholesalers and the scheme of blue dyeing of PDS kerosene should be implemented. But some States would require more time to introduce the system for delivered supply of kerosene.

(iv) The compulsions behind the increase in prices of rice and wheat supplied through PDS were appreciated but the States felt that there should not be one to one correspondence between increases in Minimum Support Prices for producers and Central Issue Prices for consumers through PDS.

(v) It is necessary for the States to consider seriously the recommendations of the Group of Ministers before the NDC considers it. This would be in the interest of sharp targetting of the needy and poor. It would be advisable to combine the minimum employment programme for the rural areas and the women saving programme so that poverty alleviation is made possible.

(f) Action on the conclusions at (i) and (ii) above are to be taken by State Government/UT Administration. Central Government has already initiated the review of the list of essential commodities and the instructions regarding phas-

sed introduction of delivered supplies of SKO to wholesalers and blue dyeing of SKO distributed through PDS in the entire country. Some State Governments are yet to finalise the revised rates of transportation etc., for implementing the delivered supplies of SKO. Recommendations at (iv) above and the suggestion regarding targetting the PDS were made by the Committee of Ministers set up by the Advisory Council on PDS in their "Report on the National Policy on PDS". Central Government has so far not taken any decision on these issues. No specific time frame can be indicated for these decisions. Central Government has already decided to implement the Assured Employment Programme in all the Blocks covered under the RPDS.

Black marketing of kerosene Oil in the Country

6222. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA; Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 4255 given in the Rajya Sabha on 25th April 1994 and state:

(a) how many cases of black marketing of kerosene oil were detected in the country during the last two years with State-wise details thereof;

(b) what actions were taken against the black marketeers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 425 for 25th April, 1994. Relates to import of Palm Oil. It seems that the reference is to Rajya Sabha Question No. 4251 for 25th April, 1994.

(a) The Government of India does not maintain commodity-wise details.

(b) State Government/U.T. Administrations have been taking action against persons indulging in hoarding, black-marketing and other malpractices in respect of all essential commodities includ-

ing kerosene oil under various Control Orders issued under Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and similar relevant legislations. The persons found guilty of violations of orders issued under the E.C. Act, 1955 are liable to punishments prescribed under the Act with a mandatory terms of imprisonment, apart from cancellation of licence, suspension of operation of kerosene oil Depot and forfeiture of securities for violation of terms and conditions of the licence.

Cheaper rates of rice and wheat in open market than PDS

6223. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government are aware that wheat and rice are available in the open market at cheaper rates than the rates of these commodities in PDS;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and its impact on the PDS system; and

(c) what remedial action Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) to (c) As a result of the good harvest, the open market prices of rice and wheat are reported to be marginally lower than the Central Issue Prices of these grains for the Public Distribution System (PDS) at certain centres as on 4.5.94. As the season advances open market prices, generally, would tend to increase. While offtake through the PDS might go down slightly during the post-harvest months in some areas having surplus production it is not likely to have any permanent or adverse impact on the PDS during the coming year.