

(a) whether Government is aware that Food Corporation of India has procured poor quality wheat during the current season;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the norms laid down for procurement of wheat from markets by Government are violated by FCI; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government to bring transparency in the procurement of wheat/grains by FCI?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) The Food Corporation of India (FCI) has informed that no poor quality wheat has been procured during current Rabi Marketing Season i.e. 2009-10 by them.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. FCI procures wheat from the farmers at Minimum Support Price (MSP) as per specifications laid down by Government.

Introduction of cash for subsidy scheme

1547. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

SHRI N.K. SINGH:

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

(a) whether some of the State Governments have urged the Union Government to introduce cash for subsidy scheme to weed out corruption in the Public Distribution System;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Public Distribution System is not being implemented properly and effectively by States and thereby genuine beneficiaries are cheated; and

(d) if so, the details of the steps taken by Government to re-examine the scheme of PDS in various parts of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) State Governments of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Delhi submitted proposals for approval to direct disbursement of food subsidy in cash to BPL families in lieu of foodgrains under TPDS on a pilot basis in five districts i.e. Lakhimpur Kheri and Hardoi in Uttar Pradesh, Panchkula and Jhajjar in Haryana and Central District in Delhi. Based on those proposals, a draft scheme has been prepared to test feasibility of this alternative mode of transfer of food subsidy to BPL/AAY beneficiaries under TPDS. The draft scheme is under examination. In response to the concept note circulated on the proposed National Food Security Act, Government of Bihar has also now suggested for introduction of cash subsidy under TPDS.

(c) and (d) For independent feed-back on working of TPDS, Government gets it evaluated through independent agencies. The latest reports of NCAER on concurrent evaluation of TPDS in 12 States have shown certain deficiencies such as inclusion and exclusion errors, diversion of BPL/AAY

allocations to APL category, etc. Also, as per the poverty estimates of the Planning Commission of 1993-94 and the population estimates of the Registrar General of India as on 1st March 2000, the number of BPL families in the country was 6.52 crore. However, as reported by June 2009, the State and UT Governments have issued 10.86 crore BPL ration cards, which include 2.43 crore AAY cards.

To improve functioning of TPDS, Government has been regularly requesting State & UT Governments to streamline it by -

- (i) continuous review of lists of BPL and AAY families and ensuring timely availability of foodgrains at fair price shops;
- (ii) ensuring greater transparency in functioning of TPDS;
- (iii) improved monitoring and vigilance at various levels; monthly certification of delivery of essential commodities by FPS licensees to ration card holders; and
- (iv) introduction of new technologies such as Computerization of TPDS operations at various levels, smart-card-based delivery of essential commodities, etc.

Allocation of foodgrains to Madhya Pradesh

†1548. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) the quantum of foodgrains to be allocated to Madhya Pradesh during the financial year 2009-10;
- (b) the reasons for reduction in the supply of foodgrains to Madhya Pradesh during the financial year 2008-09;
- (c) the quantum of foodgrains demanded for the financial year 2009-10; and
- (d) whether the Central Government would make foodgrains available for Madhya Pradesh this year as per its demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (d) The Central Government makes allocation of foodgrains to States/UTs under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) for all Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Antyodaya Anna Yojna (AAY) families, on the basis of ration cards issued by the States/UTs or the number of households on the basis of poverty estimates of Planning Commission for 1993-94 and population projection of Registrar General of India as on 01.03.2000, whichever is less, @ 35 kgs. per family per month.

The allocations for APL category are made depending upon the availability of stock of foodgrains in Central Pool and the past offtake by States. As such, these allocations are not based on demands of State Governments.

The allocations of rice for the APL category under TPDS from April, 2008 were based on each State's offtake during 2006-07 and 2007-08. However, wheat allocation was maintained at the level of 2007-08. Considering the demand from the State for additional allocation of foodgrains, the

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.