

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (c) In order to make delivery of services efficient under TPDS and to access replicability of use of smart cards for this purpose, Govt. has approved in December, 2008 implementation of a pilot scheme of smart cards based TPDS in Chandigarh and Haryana. Under it, eligible BPL families would be issued smart cards in place of existing ration cards. They will have biometric features of the family members, based on which verification of genuineness of the BPL families will take place and thereafter only the essential commodities would be issued to them from the fair price shops.

For commencing implementation of this scheme, work is in progress by the implementing agencies *i.e.* Govt. of Haryana, Chandigarh UT Administration and National Informatics Centre.

Supply of rice and wheat to BPL families at Rs. 3 per kilogram

179. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:

SHRI DARA SINGH:

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

(a) whether Government is planning to supply rice and wheat to BPL families at Rs. 3 per kg. during the next financial year;

(b) if so, what would be the total outflow of funds during the years 2009-10 and 2010-11 year-wise for this purpose; and

(c) how Government proposes to supply rice and wheat to needy persons as well as to ensure that black marketing/misuse would not take place otherwise the rice and wheat may not reach the needy persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (c) As per the President's Address to Parliament on 4th June, 2009, the Government proposes to enact National Food Security Act to provide for assured food security for all citizens and to make entitled, by law, every family below the poverty line in rural and urban areas to 25 kgs. of rice or wheat per month @ Rs.3 per kg.

In order to frame the proposed law, Government has initiated necessary action. Examination of different aspects of the proposed law in consultation with State Governments, various Central Ministries, experts and other stake holders is presently in progress.

Presently, under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) allocation of food grains @ 35 kg per family per month is made for 6.52 crore Below Poverty Line (BPL) (including the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families on the basis of 1993-94 poverty estimates of the Planning Commission projected on the population estimates of Registrar General of India as on 1.3.2000 and for 7.4 lakh families in the KBK districts in Orissa.

With the existing scale of allocations, Central Issue Prices for the BPL and AAY category, number of BPL and AAY families, and economic cost of FCI, annual subsidy during 2009-10 is estimated as approximately Rs.37,010 crores.

However, for the next year, the annual subsidy would depend on changes in the component factors of economic cost of food grains, Central Issue Prices, scale of Issue, number of BPL families to be covered, etc.

Government has taken a series of measures to streamline TPDS to check diversion of food grains and ensure delivery of food grains to identified BPL families by:

- (i) improving functioning of TPDS through continuous review of lists of BPL and AAY families, door step delivery of foodgrains to fair price shops, timely availability of foodgrains at fair price shops and training of staff as well as vigilance committee members;
- (ii) ensuring greater transparency in functioning of TPDS through display of lists of BPL and AAY families at fair price shops, display of allocated quantities on web sites, adoption and implementation of revised Citizens' Charter, monthly certification of delivery of foodgrains to fair price shops and their distribution to ration card holders, and taking up publicity-cum-awareness campaign;
- (iii) improved monitoring and vigilance at various levels and strict penal action against those involved in malpractices, including action against staff responsible for issuing ineligible ration cards and persons found in possession of such ration cards;
- (iv) introduction of new technologies such as Computerization of TPDS operations at various levels, smart-card-based delivery of essential commodities, use of global positioning system on vehicles transporting TPDS commodities, bar coding of ration cards, etc. and
- (v) getting functioning of TPDS periodically evaluated.

Cash for food programme

180. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA:

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

- (a) whether it was proposed to end the public distribution system and provide cash for food pilot project;
- (b) if so, whether his Ministry is still awaiting Central go ahead for project under cash for food programme;
- (c) if so, whether Government had asked Union Territory of Delhi to start this project in one district and commitment was made to assess beneficiaries after implementation;