

(d) to (f) In view of (c) above, Do not arise.

Cash incentives to BPL families through PDS

3088. SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any move to pay cash incentives to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families instead of food items through the Public Distribution System (PDS);

(b) if so, whether such a scheme would be workable at all when prices of essential commodities are touching the sky; and

(c) what is the guarantee about availability of food items in remote areas and against the exploitation of poor by greedy traders selling them at a much higher price?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (c) State Governments of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Delhi submitted proposals for approval to direct disbursement of food subsidy in cash to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families in lieu of foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System (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. The State Government has been requested to submit a proposal in this regard.

As envisaged under the scheme, with the food subsidy given to BPL families in cash, they would be at liberty to purchase wheat/rice/sugar of their own choice and quantity from open market. However, the pilot scheme has been formulated based on requests of State governments and its implementation would precisely test its feasibility.

Restoring the allocation of rice to Kerala

3089. SHRI P.R. RAJAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Centre would consider restoring the allocation of rice to Kerala; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) allocations of food grains for Below Poverty Line (BPL) including Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families have been maintained @ 35 kg. per family per month as per entitlement for all States and UTs, including Kerala. However, allocations of APL rice and

wheat to States and UTs, including Kerala are being made based on availability of foodgrains in the Central Pool and past offtake. Presently, allocations under APL category are made @ 10.5 kg. per family per month to Kerala.

In 2008-09, allocation of rice was initially made @ 17056 tons per month on the basis of average of offtake in the previous two years *i.e.* 2006-07 and 2007-08. However, subsequently, on the basis of requests from the State Government and higher availability of rice in the central pool, *ad hoc*/additional/festival allocations of 1.46 lakh tons of rice were made during the year. The total APL rice allocation to the State was 3.51 lakh tons as against the previous year's allocation of 3.07 lakh tons.

For the current year 2009-2010, monthly allocation of 36,056 tons of rice under APL category has been made thereby substantially increasing the annual allocation of rice to 4.33 lakh tons as compared to last year's allocation of 3.51 lakh tons. Thus the allocation of APL rice to Kerala during the current year has already been increased as compared to the previous two years.

Hunger and malnutrition

3090. DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that a new 'Save the Children' report states that one million infants die of malnutrition every year in India;

(b) if so, whether Government is also aware that according to a World Food Programme report released last month it has been pointed out that more than 455 million Indians survive of US \$1.25 a day or less, compared with 420 million in 1981 and about 230 million people supposed to remain hungry;

(c) if so, the details in this regard; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to stamp out hunger and malnutrition?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (d) The report entitled "Freedom from Hunger for Children under Six" of 'Save the Children', an NGO has stated that every year, 2 million children die in India and more than half of these deaths could be prevented if children were well nourished.

As informed by World Food Programme (India), no report was released by them last month mentioning figures on hunger and malnutrition.

According to FAO's "The State of Food Insecurity in the World" — 2008 report, the number of under nourished people in India during 2003-05 was 230.5 million. The World Bank's Policy Research Working Paper 4703 entitled "The Developing World is Poorer than We Thought, But No less Successful in the fight against Poverty" prepared in August, 2008 has mentioned that the number of persons living below US\$1.25 a day in India during 1981 were 420.5 million and in 2005 it was 455.8 million.