

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of households belonging to the middle income group in the country at present are unable to avail of the facilities of public distribution system;

(b) whether Government is aware that large number of bogus card holders of various categories are misusing the system;

(c) if so, whether Government proposes to review the system to make all citizens in the country eligible to draw foodgrains, sugar, etc. at reasonable prices so as to bring down the prices of essential commodities; and

(d) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (d) Allocations of foodgrains for Above Poverty Line (APL) category families under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) are made depending upon the availability of stocks of foodgrains in the Central Pool. During 2009-10, a total quantity of 199.94 lakh tons of foodgrains have been allocated to States/UTs under APL category. Presently, allocations of foodgrains range between 10 kg and 35 kg per family per month in respect of all accepted number of families including APL families in the country.

Instructions have been issued to all State/UT Governments to carry out an intensive campaign to eliminate ineligible/bogus ration cards and to take action as per law against the persons found in possession of bogus/fake ration cards and the Government staff found responsible for issuing ration cards to ineligible families/persons. As a result of the instructions issued, State/UT Governments have reported from July, 2006 to January, 2010, deletion of 171.91 lakhs bogus/ineligible ration cards.

There is no proposal to make PDS items available to all citizens in the country. However, instructions have been issued to State/UT Governments to take proactive steps to contain rise in prices of food grains and other essential commodities and keep the cost of intermediation under check for reducing the gap between the wholesale and retail prices by using agencies such as the Civil Supplies Corporations for procurement of Non-PDS food articles in bulk for distribution to the retail consumers.

Subsidy for MIO Scheme in Kerala

1733. SHRJ A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that competent authority of Kerala had submitted a letter during August, 2009 regarding Kerala State Civil Supplies Cooperation that functions as the second line of Public Distribution System in Kerala;

- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the action taken in details to provide central subsidy for Market Intervention Operation (MIO) scheme as submitted in the above letter;
- (d) whether steps will be taken in affirmative to the above proposal; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) The State Govt has requested the Central Government to formulate a scheme for ensuring availability of essential items, to the Govt. of Kerala/Kerala State Civil Supplies Corporation for distribution to the public at affordable prices. The State Govt has stated that during 2008-09, the State Govt have incurred an expenditure of Rs. 105 crore towards subsidy for the distribution of the subsidized items under the Market Intervention Operation (MIO) Scheme, besides Rs.40 crore in the current year. The State Govt. has requested to provide Rs.150 crore as subsidy to the Govt. of Kerala for subsidizing the non PDS essential commodities such as pulses, spices & edible oils.

(c) to (e) At present, there is no existing scheme under which financial assistance can be given as Central Subsidy for Market Intervention Operation Scheme to the State Government of Kerala. A scheme for giving financial assistance to State/Union Territory (UT) Governments for non-formal Public Distribution System through State Civil Supplies Corporations and Consumers Marketing Federations has been formulated for approval. The scheme aims at strengthening the capacity of the State Agencies i.e. State Civil Supplies Corporations and Consumers Marketing Federations through augmentation of their financial resources with one time financial assistance from the Government of India and thereby enabling them to intervene effectively in the market by augmenting availability of essential commodities at reasonable prices in time of scarcity and/or spurt in prices.

Sugar import by Uttar Pradesh sugar mill owners

1734. SHRI B.S. GNANADESIKAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that 9 lakh tonnes of raw sugar imported by Uttar Pradesh sugar mills owners is stuck up at the ports as the State Government disallowed the entry of imported raw sugar for processing and sale despite repeated requests from the Central Government;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the State Government's move to guard the interests of the cane growers is unconvincing as the sugarcane availability is insufficient to operate the plants for the full session; and