

Revamping PDS

2924. SHRI T.K. RANGARAJAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is any proposal for revamping the Public Distribution System;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether there is any plan for restoring the Universal PDS;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; 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) to (b) Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of Central Government and State/Union Territory (UT) Governments. The Central Government is responsible for procurement, allocation and transportation of foodgrains upto the designated depots of the Food Corporation of India. The operational responsibilities for lifting and distributing the allocated foodgrains within the States/UTs, identification of eligible Below Poverty Line (BPL) families, issuance of ration cards to them and supervision over distribution of allocated foodgrains to eligible card holders through the fair price shops (FPSs) are of the State/UT Governments.

Public Distribution System (Control) Order 2001 mandates the State and UT Governments to carry out all required actions to ensure smooth functioning of the TPDS.

Strengthening and streamlining of TPDS is a continuous process. To improve functioning of TPDS, Government has been regularly requesting State/UT Governments for continuous review of lists of BPL and AAY families, ensuring timely availability of foodgrains at FPSs, bringing about greater transparency in functioning of TPDS, improved monitoring and vigilance at all levels and introduction of new technologies such as Computerization of TPDS operations at various levels.

In the Conference of Food Secretaries of States and UTs on Best Practices and Reforms in TPDS held on 12th & 13th July, 2010, the above directions have been reiterated.

(c) to (e) With a view to specifically target poor sections of society for distribution of subsidized foodgrains (rice, wheat & coarse grains) and sugar, Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is presently under implementation. There is no plan to restore Universal Public Distribution System.

Further, procurement of huge quantities of wheat and rice to meet the requirement of Universal Public Distribution System, would result in lower availability of foodgrains in the market, leading to rise in open market prices. If the same quantity of foodgrains is distributed equally among all, then the scale of issue will have to be reduced.

Besides, in order to manage the level of food subsidy, the issue prices of rice and wheat may have to be increased substantially from the present Central Issue Prices (CIPs). This would mean that BPL and AAY families would get much reduced scale of issue and also have to pay higher CIPs.

Rottening of foodgrains

2925. SHRI BHARATKUMAR RAUT: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that 61,000 tonnes of foodgrains had rotten in its granaries as it was kept with poor protection for too long;

(b) if so, the details, State-wise where the foodgrains are being kept in open under tarpaulins cover which is not a good weather-proof material;

(c) the details, State-wise, where the foodgrains were spoiled due to rains and other reasons;

(d) the details of estimated loss incurred to the exchequer due to the negligence of FCI staff; and

(e) the steps Government intend to take against the FCI officials found guilty?