

Problem areas of present TPDS

2948. SHRI R.C. SINGH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that surveys conducted by Programme Evaluation Organisation of the Planning Commission and ORG-Marg have identified major problem areas in the present TPDS;
- (b) if so, the areas that have been identified by the above surveys;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that food coupons could effectively break the hegemony of fair-price shopkeepers; and
- (d) if so, whether Government would consider replacing TPDS with food coupons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (b) The Department of Food and Public Distribution got Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) evaluated by ORG MARG. The evaluation study covered the period of 2003-04 and 2004-05. The report mentioned diversion of 39% of rice and 53% of wheat under TPDS. The report mentioned that diversion was because of inclusion errors, leakages through ghost ration cards and pilferages during transportation and from Fair Price Shops.

As per the Programme Evaluation Organization (PEO) of the Planning Commission's Report on Performance Evaluation of TPDS submitted in March, 2005, about 42% of subsidized foodgrains reached the targeted Below Poverty Line (BPL) beneficiaries. It pointed out that implementation of the TPDS suffered due to targeting errors, prevalence of ghost cards, unidentified households and siphoning off of foodgrains from the supply chain.

To improve functioning of TPDS, Government has been regularly requesting State/Union Territory (UT) Governments for continuous review of lists of BPL and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families, ensuring timely availability of foodgrains at Fair Price Shops (FPSs), ensuring greater transparency in functioning of TPDS, improved monitoring and vigilance at various levels and introduction of new technologies such as Computerization of TPDS operations at various levels.

(c) A few States/Union Territories (UTs) have introduced food coupons, some only on a pilot basis. Government of Andhra Pradesh has issued Bar coded coupons for drawal of rice and kerosene under TPDS to ensure that there is no impersonation/false accounting in distribution of essential commodities by the Fair Price Shop (FPS) dealers. Arunachal Pradesh Government has initiated coupon system on an experimental basis in Tirap District. Coupons are issued to beneficiaries at the time of issuance / renewal of ration cards. The next month's allocation is based on the coupons submitted by the FPS dealer. Jammu & Kashmir Government is issuing ration cards in a booklet form for two years containing 24 coupons. As reported by Government of Bihar, monthly food coupons are issued to BPL and AAY families for a year and food grains are distributed to families on the basis of such coupons. However, effectiveness of such coupons in eliminating deficiencies in TPDS has not yet been evaluated. There is no proposal to replace TPDS with Food Coupons.

Damage of wheat procured by FCI

2949. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large quantity of wheat procured by FCI has been damaged on account of recent rains and floods in various States;

(b) if so, the details thereof in each State and the action taken against the officials found responsible in this behalf; and

(c) whether warehousing shortage in those State still persist and if so, the details thereof and the efforts being made to meet the shortage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Damages to wheat stocks by recent rains and flood in Uttar Pradesh, Uttrakhand, Rajasthan, Haryana, Punjab, Maharashtra and West Bengal have been reported as under: