

(d) the tentative time by which the same would be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The details of promotion made in the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution during the last five years in all the categories are as under:-

Group	UR	SCs	STs	Total
A	36	13	09	58
B	70	55	14	139
C	28	17	02	47
D	-	01	01	02

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Short selling in agri-commodity market

3464. DR. T.N. SEEMA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that short selling is a major cause behind downfall in the agri-commodity market now;

(b) whether Government is aware of the fact that short selling is banned in many European countries recently; and

(c) whether Government would take necessary steps to control the short selling in the interest of farmers in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) It is learnt from media reports that four countries namely France, Italy, Spain and Belgium have banned short selling of shares of a group of banks and financial institutions which is a cash market for securities. The Government is not aware of any such ban in any European country in futures trading in commodities.

(c) No Sir. Futures market is a platform for discovering market price, and not for controlling prices. Futures market is the platform for covering price-risk and not a platform for merchandising contracts. Short selling is an integral part of any future market as there is no compulsion for physical delivery of commodities as the price-risk can be managed without having to give or take delivery, except where the position remains outstanding till the date of expiry. Internationally too, physical delivery is a miniscule percentage of total volumes traded in the futures market. A ban on short sale in a futures market would virtually bring futures market to a standstill as very large percentage of sellers would become ineligible to sell in this market. The prices-discovery would be distorted and consequently it would become unsuitable market for price-risk management. Thus, the very purpose for which this market is set up would get defeated. As explained above, farmers' interests are not promoted by restricting short sales.

Bogus ration cards

3465. SHRIMATI KUSUM RAI:

SHRI PRABHAT JHA:

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

- (a) the details of bogus ration cards in the country, State-wise;
- (b) whether there are millions of bogus ration cards in U.P., Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh;
- (c) if so, the details thereof, district wise;
- (d) whether Government has weeded out bogus ration cards;
- (e) if so, the details thereof during the last three years, so far, State-wise; and
- (f) the details of other steps taken/proposed to be taken to weed out bogus ration cards and to ensure that ration under PDS reaches to the targeted families, particularly in U.P.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS) : (a) to (f) Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State/Union Territory (UT) Governments. Central Government is responsible for procurement, allocation and transportation of