**Pilferage during procurement and distribution in PDS**

808. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether recently, a Supreme Court Bench, comprising hearing petitions relating to the streamlining of the Public Distribution System (PDS) expressed serious concern over the increasing number of starvation deaths; and

(b) if so, what are the various measures undertaken by the Central Government accordingly for creating a proper system to prevent pilferage from procurement and distribution till the procurement meets the end users of the foodgrains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) The Hon'ble Supreme Court, in its order dated 14.05.2011 in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 196 of 2001 referred to a number of cases of malnutrition and starvation reported from time to time and directed the Union of India, as a one-time measure, to reserve 5 million tonnes of food grains for distribution to the 150 poorest districts or the extremely poor and vulnerable sections of society. Further, the Hon'ble Supreme Court directed that the additional 5 million tonnes reserved by the Union of India may be allocated on the recommendation of the Central Vigilance Committee on Public Distribution System under the Chairmanship of Justice (Retd.) D.P. Wadhwa. In its Order dated 22.07.2011, the Hon'ble Supreme Court has also directed the State/UT Governments to ensure that foodgrains made available to them be lifted and distributed to the needy without further loss of time.

Government allocates foodgrains to States/Union Territories (UTs) for distribution to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families, including Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families @ 35 kg per family per month. Allocation of foodgrains to Above Poverty Line (APL) families are also made depending upon the availability of foodgrains in the central pool and the past offtake. *Adhoc* additional allocations of foodgrains for BPL and APL families are also made to the States/UTs to meet their additional requirements.

In order to maintain supplies and securing availability and distribution of essential commodities, Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001 has been notified on August 31, 2001 which mandates the State and UT Governments to carry out all required action to ensure smooth functioning of TPDS. An offence committed in violation of the provisions of this Order is liable for penal action under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.

In terms of the PDS (Control) Order, 2001, Food Corporation of India (FCI) or any other agency designated for the purpose by the Central Government is to ensure physical delivery of foodgrains to State Governments for distribution under the Public Distribution System as per the

allocations made by the Central Government. State Governments shall make arrangements for taking delivery of essential commodities issued by the Central Government by their designated agencies or nominees from the FCI depots/godowns and ensure further delivery to the fair price shop. State Governments shall also exercise necessary checks to ensure that full quantity lifted by them reaches their godowns and in turn the fair price shops. Utilisation Certificates (UCs) for the foodgrains allocated to State Government are obtained regularly from the State Governments.

In consultation with the State/UT Governments, a Nine Point Action Plan was evolved in 2006, which *inter alia* includes continuous review of BPL/AAY lists and to eliminate bogus/ineligible ration cards alongwith strict action to be taken against the guilty to ensure leakage free distribution of foodgrains.

TPDS has been strengthened and streamlined over the years. To improve functioning of TPDS, Government has been regularly issuing. advisories and requesting State/UT Governments for continuous review of lists of BPL and 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. A Conference of States/UTs on Best Practices and Reforms in TPDS was also held in July, 2010.

**Food security allowance to targeted sections**

809. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the draft Food Security Bill makes it mandatory on the part of the States to pay food security allowance to targeted sections, in case of failure to supply foodgrains under the above Bill;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any consultations on (a) above have been held with the State Governments; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the outcome of such consultations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (d) In pursuance to the announcement made by the President of India in her address to the Joint Session of Parliament on 4th June, 2009, to enact a new law - the National Food Security Act - the Government prepared a Concept Note and had consultations with the Central Ministries/Departments, States/Union Territories, experts and other stakeholders. Based on their comments/suggestions and recommendations of National Advisory Council (NAC) and Expert Committee constituted under