

†479. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the existing Consumer Protection Act (CPA) has become irrelevant and ineffective;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that very few cases of the consumer grievances are disposed of within the stipulated time;
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons, therefor;
- (e) whether Government is considering to amend the existing legislation; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

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

(c) and (d) The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 provides that every complaint shall be heard as expeditiously as possible and endeavour shall be made to decide the complaint within a period of three months from the date of receipt of notice by opposite party where the complaint does not require analysis or testing of commodities and within five months if it requires analysis or testing of commodities.

As intimated by national Commission, the overall disposal rate as on 29-02-2012 is 90.54%. All efforts are being taken by Government and NCDRC to ensure timely disposal of consumer cases.

(e) and (f) Yes, Sir. The Consumer Protection (Amendment) Bill, 2011 was introduced in Lok Sabha on 16-12-2011 with a view of further widening and amplifying the scope of the provisions of existing Consumer Protection Act, 1986, facilitating faster disposal of cases and rationalizing the qualification and procedure of selection of the Presidents and Members of the Consumer Fora. The Bill has been referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution for its consideration.

#### **Implementation of FSA with existing PDS**

480. 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 the proposed National Food Security Act (NFSA) can not be implemented with the existing Public Distribution System (PDS) which is full of loopholes; and
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the measures proposed to be taken to

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

remove the loopholes and modernize the system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) As implementation of Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is joint responsibility of Central Government and State/Union Territory (UT) Governments, the National Food Security Bill, introduced in the Lok Sabha on 22-12-2011, provides that the Central and State Governments shall endeavour to progressively undertake reforms in TPDS, such as doorstep delivery of foodgrains, application of information and communication technology (ICT) tools including end to end computerisation, leveraging 'aadhaar' for unique identification of beneficiaries, diversification of commodities under TPDS, etc.

Strengthening and streamlining of the TPDS is a continuous process. Government of India has requested all States/Union Territories to take up end-to-end computerization of TPDS in a time-bound manner to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the TPDS. Government has regularly reviewed and also has issued instructions to State/Union Territories to strengthen functioning of TPDS by improving monitoring mechanism and vigilance, increased transparency in functioning of TPDS, adoption of revised Model Citizen's Charter, use of information and communication technology (ICT) tools and improving the efficiency of Fair Price Shop operations.

#### **Export of wheat and rice**

481. SHRI SABIR ALI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether wheat and rice are proposed to be exported, in view of bumper crop production and inadequacy of godowns to store them; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard and the steps Government proposes to take to maintain the availability of foodgrains in the domestic market at reasonable prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. In view of record production, procurement and comfortable stock position of wheat and non-basmati rice in Central Pool far in excess of buffer norm/strategic reserve, the Government on 9-9-2011 has permitted export of wheat and non-basmati rice under Open General Licence (OGL) by private parties and State Trading Enterprises (STEs) out of privately held stocks. As on 5-3-2012, a quantity of 35,48,459.697 MTs of non-basmati rice and 5,70,930.661 MTs of wheat have been exported. The Government has taken various steps to maintain the availability of foodgrains in domestic market at reasonable prices as given in Statement.