

**Import of rice**

2662. SHRIMATI RENUBALA PRADHAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering to import rice to build stocks if procurement falls below 27 million tonnes in the current season of rabi and kharif for the current year;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the aims and objectives of such policies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) No, Sir. As per the Central Pool Rice Budget for the Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) October 2011 to September 2012, as on 1-4-2012 the availability of rice stock is 33.35 million tonnes. The procurement of rice as on 26-04-2012 is 30.74 million tonnes. In view of the good procurement and comfortable stock position in the Central Pool stock, there is no proposal at present to import rice.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

**Funds for improvement of PDS**

2663. DR. T.N. SEEMA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken any measures to release funds for reforming Public Distribution System (PDS);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any measures are being taken for penalizing those who provide foodgrains to bogus beneficiaries; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard?

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

To strengthen and streamline the implementation of Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), funds are released to the State/UT Governments under various schemes.

Under the Plan Scheme on computerization of TPDS operations, funds have been provided to States, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh and Delhi for implementing the scheme in three districts each on pilot basis. Funds have also been allocated under Non-Plan Scheme to the State of Haryana and Chandigarh UT for the pilot scheme on Smart Card based delivery of essential commodities. A Plan Scheme on *end-to-end* Computerization of TPDS is also being taken up on cost sharing basis with States/UTs under the Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-2017).

Under the scheme for use of new technologies to curb leakages/diversion of foodgrains meant for TPDS, funds are released to States/UTs for installation of Global Positioning System (GPS) sets on vehicles carrying TPDS commodities for tracking the movement of such vehicles. Funds are also released to States/UTs for conducting of training courses for functionaries of the State Food and Civil Supplies Departments, etc engaged in the public distribution of essential commodities. Funds are also being provided to the State/UT Governments under a Plan Scheme for generating awareness amongst TPDS beneficiaries about their entitlement and redressal mechanism.

(c) and (d) 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 eliminate bogus/ineligible ration cards alongwith strict action to be taken against the guilty to ensure leakage free distribution of foodgrains. State/UT Governments were requested to initiate penal action against the Government staff found responsible for issuing bogus/ineligible ration cards and the families/persons possessing such ration cards. Instructions were issued to all State/UT Governments to carry out an intensive campaign from October, 2009 to December, 2009 to review the existing lists of BPL/AAY families and eliminate ineligible/bogus ration cards. Instructions have also been issued to all State/UT Governments to issue warning to the bogus cards holders through advertisements in the newspapers, to surrender the bogus cards. As a result of these measures, States/UTs have reported deletion of 248.05 lakh bogus/ineligible cards upto 31.03.2012.

As provided in the Public Distribution System (Control) Order 2001, the State/UT Governments are responsible for implementing TPDS and competent to take action against those indulging in malpractices in TPDS by invoking provisions of clauses 8 and 9 of the said Order. The details of number of persons arrested/prosecuted/convicted during 2009, 2010 and 2011 in pursuance of action taken under clauses 8 and 9 of PDS (Control) Order, 2001, as reported by State/UT Governments,

are as under:

Sl. No.	Year	Number of persons arrested/ prosecuted/convicted.
1	2009	5149
2	2010	7441
3	2011	1885

**Families benefited under PDS**

2664. SHRIMATI NAZNIN FARUQUE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of families being benefited from Public Distribution System (PDS), at present in Assam;

(b) whether the various items are available in sufficient quantity for distribution; and

(c) if not, the details of specific steps being taken to make the distribution system strong in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (c) For allocation of foodgrains (wheat and rice) to States and Union Territories (UTs) under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), Department of Food and Public Distribution uses the number of Below Poverty Line (BPL) families based on 1993-94 poverty estimates of Planning Commission and the population estimates of Registrar General of India as on 1st March 2000 or the number of such families actually identified and ration cards issued to them by State/UT Governments, whichever is less. As per these estimates, the number of BPL families is 6.52 crore, which includes 2.43 crore Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families. Further, as per these estimates, the accepted number of BPL families in State of Assam are 18.36 lakh, including 7.040 lakh AAY families. Allocation of foodgrains to these accepted number of BPL/AAY families, including the BPL/AAY families in the State of Assam, are being made @ 35 kg. per family per month.

Allocation of foodgrains are also made to Above Poverty Line (APL) families based on the availability of foodgrains in the central pool and past offtake. Presently, the allocation of foodgrains to APL families to States/UTs ranges between 15 kg. and 35 kg. per family per month. In respect of State of Assam, full allocation of foodgrains is being made @ 35 kg per family per month for the 26.57 lakh APL families in Assam.

The stock of foodgrains (rice and wheat) in the Central Pool (as on 1.04.2012) is 533.02 lakh tons comprising 333.50 lakh tons of rice and 199.52 lakh tons of wheat,