

Rampant corruption in PDS

362. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of rampant corruption in the Public Distribution System (PDS) in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and what action is being taken to revamp PDS to make it corruption free?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) There have been reports about irregularities in implementation of Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) in certain regions/States in the country. As and when complaints are received by the Government from individuals and organizations as well as through press reports, they have been sent to State/Union Territory (UT) Governments concerned for inquiry and appropriate action.

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. State and UT Governments have been directed in July 2006 to implement 9-Point Action Plan for streamlining working of TPDS. Utilisation Certificates (UCs) for the foodgrains allocated to State Government are obtained regularly from the State Governments.

Government has regularly reviewed and also has issued instructions to States/Union Territories to strengthen functioning of Targeted Public Distribution System (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.

Beneficiaries covered under AAY

363. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government has received any requests from the

States for increasing the number of beneficiaries covered under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY);

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Central Government thereto; and

(c) the details of the mechanism in place to ensure distribution of foodgrains to the intended beneficiaries of AAY?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Against the accepted number of 2.50 crore AAY families given to State/UT Governments, upto July, 2012, the States/UTs have reported issuance of AAY ration cards to 2.43 crore AAY families. Allocation of foodgrains (rice and wheat) to these AAY families are made @ 35 kg. per family per month at a highly subsidized Central Issue Price (CIP) of Rs. 2 per kg. for wheat and Rs. 3 per kg. for rice.

Requests have been received from State Governments and others for coverage of additional families under AAY and allocation of foodgrains to them in States of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh. As the State Governments are required to identify AAY families within the ceiling of number of AAY families allocated to each State, the requests for coverage of additional families under AAY beyond the targeted number could not be acceded to. States/Union Territories (UTs) are also advised from time to time to review the existing list of AAY beneficiaries and remove the ineligible beneficiaries so as to include only the most eligible.

(c) Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001 mandates the State and UT Governments to carry out all required action to ensure smooth functioning of TPDS. State Governments shall make arrangements for taking delivery of essential commodities issued by the Central Government by their designated agencies or nominees from the Food Corporation of India (FCI) depots/godowns and ensure further delivery to the fair price shop. State/UT Governments shall also exercise necessary checks to ensure that full quantity lifted by them reaches their godowns and in turn the fair price shops.

In consultation with the State/UT Governments, a Nine Point Action Plan was also evolved in 2006, which *inter-alia* includes continuous review of BPL/AAY lists to eliminate bogus/ineligible ration cards, involvement of elected Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in PDS operations including running of fair price shops,

representation of PRIs on Vigilance Committees, display of BPL and AAY lists by fair price shops for ensuring transparency, door-step delivery of foodgrains, etc, alongwith strict action to be taken against the guilty to ensure leakage free distribution of foodgrains.

Reforms in PDS

364. DR. K.P. RAMALINGAM: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is considering to review PDS reforms to check foodgrain pilferage;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether it is a fact that more than 40 per cent of subsidized grains do not reach the targeted beneficiaries;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether 2.21 crore bogus ration cards had been detected and deleted from the list of beneficiaries for subsidized foodgrains by different States since 2006; 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) Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is implemented jointly by Government of India and State/Union Territory(UT) Governments wherein the responsibilities for allocation of foodgrains within State/UT and supervision of distribution of allocated foodgrains to eligible ration card holders through the fair price shops rest with the State/UT Governments.

Strengthening and streamlining of TPDS is a continuous process. To improve the functioning of TPDS, Government has been regularly requesting State/UT Governments for checking leakages/diversion of foodgrains, continuous review of lists of Below Poverty Line and Antyodaya Anna Yojana 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 Computerisation of TPDS operations at various levels.

- (c) and (d) In the Economic Survey 2010-11 prepared by Ministry of Finance,