

Department proposes to introduce a pilot scheme in six Union Territories (UTs), namely Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep and Puducherry for direct transfer of food subsidy under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS). Under the proposed scheme, foodgrains will be issued by Food Corporation of India at the economic cost. The cash subsidy equal to the difference in the economic cost and the present issue price will be credited to the bank account of the beneficiary in advance to enable the beneficiary to purchase the foodgrains at this cost. The proposal does not involve dismantling the TPDS as foodgrains shall continue to be distributed to the beneficiaries under TPDS through the Fair Price Shops. The scheme details of which will be finalized in consultation with UTs. etc. is expected to check leakages/diversion of foodgrains under TPDS and test the feasibility of launch of the scheme in other States.

(c) and (d) The food subsidy released under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and Other Welfare Schemes (OWS) during 2011-12 and current year is as under:

*(Rs. in crore)*

| Year                       | Subsidy released |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| 2011-12                    | 72370.90         |
| 2012-13 (up to 03.12.2012) | 61243.57         |

The proposed scheme does not envisage any change in the quantum of food subsidy being presently paid to the six UTs.

#### **Foodgrains for all**

1744. SHRI T.M. SELVAGANAPATHI : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there has been demand to provide foodgrains to all, instead of capping it at 67 per cent of the population;
- (b) whether there has been a demand that 8.2 crore metric tonnes of foodgrains lying in Government storages be distributed through the Public Distribution System;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) whether Government is considering to issue digitalize ration cards with bar codes in all the districts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K. V. THOMAS) : (a) The National Food Security Bill, 2011, introduced in the Lok Sabha on 22 December, 2011, provides for coverage of upto 75% of the rural population, with at least 46% population belonging to priority households and upto 50% of the urban population, with at least 28% population belonging to priority households for receiving subsidized foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution (TPDS). The Bill is presently being examined by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution. Requests have been received for Universal Public Distribution System (PDS). However, Government is not considering to introduce Universal PDS as the focus on poor will get diluted.

(b) and (c) As on 01.11.2012, the total stocks of foodgrains in Central Pool was 695.29 lakh MTs. Keeping in view the demands from the States/UTs and current surplus stocks of foodgrains in the Central Pool, Government has been making additional allocation over and above the normal TPDS allocation. During the current year, following additional allocations of foodgrains have been made :

- (i) 50 lakh tons for additional BPL families.
- (ii) 19.42 lakh tons for additional AAY/BPL families in the poorest districts.
- (iii) 7.1 lakh tons for flood, drought, festivals, etc.

In addition, 49 lakh tons of foodgrains have been allocated to Other Welfare Schemes (OWS). The total allocation during the current year is 624.95 lakh tons taking into consideration normal TPDS allocation, OWS allocation and above mentioned additional allocations.

Further, keeping in view the surplus stock available in Central Pool, foodgrains are also released under Open Market Sale Scheme (OMSS) with a view to moderate their prices in open market by increasing their availability and are exported also when the international market is favourable.

(d) All States/UTs have been requested to undertake end-to-end computerization of TPDS including digitization of ration card/beneficiary data so as to ensure correct identification of beneficiaries and distribution of TPDS commodities to deserving beneficiaries. Fair Price Shop (FPS) automation using bar-coded ration cards, food coupons, smart cards, Aadhaar based Point of Sale devices, etc. would be undertaken by States/UTs as per their requirements.