

- At least 3 kg of foodgrains per person per month to be given to general category households, at prices not exceeding 50% of Minimum Support Price.
- Women to be made head of the household for the purpose of issue of ration cards.
- Nutritional support to women and children.
- Maternity benefit to pregnant women and lactating mothers.
- End-to-end computerisation of TPDS.
- Three-tier independent grievance redressal mechanism.
- Social audit by local bodies such as Gram Panchayats, Village Councils etc.
- Meals for special groups such as destitute, homeless persons, emergency/disaster affected persons and persons living in starvation.
- Food Security Allowance in case of non-supply of foodgrains or meals.

Criterion for FPS

333. SHRIMATI VASANTHI STANLEY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) what is the criterion for establishing a Fair Price Shop (FPS) in an area;
- (b) whether geographical distribution is taken into account to establish an FPS; and
- (c) what are the measures being taken by Government to re-organise PDS in rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (c) Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State Governments/Union Territory (UT) Administrations wherein States/UTs are responsible for licensing, regulation and monitoring of functioning of Fair Price Shops (FPSs).

Some of the key criteria prescribed in the guidelines laid down by the Central Government for opening of new FPSs relating to the geographical distribution, coverage of rural areas, etc. are as follows:

- (i) New FPSs may be opened wherever necessary to provide easy physical access to consumers. States and UTs are required to identify district-wise gaps and set targets to fill up the same.
- (ii) A norm of one FPS for every 2000 persons has been suggested to the States and Union Territories. However, there may be exceptions in view of the population density, terrain of the area, etc. Nevertheless, it needs to be ensured that no consumer/card-holder has to travel more than 3 Kms. to reach the FPS.
- (iii) In areas which cannot be covered by static FPSs, mobile vans may be introduced to cover the consumers residing in hilly, remote, far-flung, desert, tribal and inaccessible areas.
- (iv) In some rural areas, particularly in Tribal Areas, sale centers may be opened at weekly Haats to provide essential commodities at fixed prices.

Production cost of sugar

334. SHRI DARSHAN SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) the production cost of sugar in different parts of the country, State-wise;
- (b) the States having highest cost of production;
- (c) the reasons therefor and its effect on the price of sugar; and
- (d) the steps being taken by Government to bring down the production cost of sugar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (c) The production cost of sugar depends upon various factors like availability of adequate raw material, recovery from sugarcane, duration of the season, plant size, efficiency of plant, technological up-gradation and diversification towards production of ethanol and power etc., State Advised Price of sugarcane, cost of working capital, managerial efficiency etc. Besides, the factors like State Advised Price of sugarcane, control of molasses etc. which affects cost of production substantially, are decided by the State Governments concerned. Therefore, the production cost varies from