

- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS) : (a) to (c) No Sir, no specific survey was conducted in the malls in the country. However there is provision in the Legal Metrology Act, 2009 for inspection of retail and wholesale shops by the Legal Metrology Officers of State Government/UTs. They generally make their own schedule of inspection and enforcement.

Supply of onion through PDS

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

- (a) whether Government has any plans to supply onion through PDS in rural villages;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, and
- (c) if not, the steps taken to control the increasing trend of price of onion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS) : (a) The Central Government has no plans at present to supply onion through PDS in rural villages.

- (b) Does not arise.

(c) The rate of inflation of onion which was negative from January, 2012 onwards till October, 2012 had shown an increase during the period of November, 2012 to January, 2013. The prices have started declining from the last fortnight of February, 2013 with the enhanced market arrivals from the onion producing regions of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Odisha and Bihar. Since these increased arrivals of onion have brought down the prices of onion, there has been no market intervention.

Use of technology in PDS

651. SHRI AVINASH PANDE : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware of use of latest technology like on-line monitoring system, SMS alerts, public partnerships, etc. by Chhattisgarh to monitor PDS;

(b) the details of extent to which this process of monitoring has been effective; and

(c) the details of steps taken by Government to make PDS more efficient and effective?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government of Chhattisgarh has introduced various reforms in the Public Distribution System (PDS) and computerized the PDS operations. State Government has also mandated organization of “Rice Festival” on a specific day every month at each Fair Price Shop (FPS). Further, it has automated 301 FPSs in Raipur, Durg, Rajnandgaon, Mahasamund cities and Mahasamund rural block under the name Centralized Online Real-time Electronic PDS (COREPDS), which is operational since March, 2012.

The State Government has reported that the process of monitoring has been effective as follows:—

- (i) Creation of unified ration card database and putting the list in the public domain has resulted in increasing transparency and elimination of duplicate and fake ration cards.
- (ii) Automated allotment has eliminated discretionary power of officers and ensured exact allocation as per the requirement.
- (iii) Taking monthly declaration of sales from FPS and considering the balance quantities at FPS in the next month’s allocation has resulted in avoiding excessive stocks at FPS and thus reduced scope for diversion.
- (iv) Real-time data on lifting has resulted in better monitoring, timely lifting and early reconciliation of stocks.
- (v) More than 30,000 citizens are receiving SMS alerts about truck dispatch to FPS. This has increased social vigilance and fear of being watched.
- (vi) “Rice Festival” has ensured that more than 95% of lifting is completed before 6th of every month. It has also increased public participation in PDS monitoring.
- (vii) COREPDS has empowered the beneficiary with a choice to select his/her FPS.

(c) Strengthening and streamlining of Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is a continuous process. Government has regularly reviewed and has issued instructions to States/UTs 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 viability of Fair Price Shop operations.

Procurement of rice and other agricultural products

652. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government undertook process of procurement of rice and other agricultural products in Assam during the last three years and current year;
- (b) if so, the details thereof indicating quantity and price fixed for each commodity during the said period, commodity-wise;
- (c) the targets of procurement fixed for the current year along with the achievements made therein;
- (d) the agency deployed for making the aforesaid procurements; and
- (e) the constraints faced by the said agency in the procurement process?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS) : (a) Yes, Sir. Rice/Paddy is procured by the State Government and Food Corporation of India (FCI) in the State of Assam. There is no procurement of wheat and coarsegrains in Assam.

(b) The paddy is procured at the Minimum Support Price (MSP) which is announced before the commencement of each marketing season. The MSP and the quantity of rice procured in the State during the last three years and current year is given below:—

KMS	Rate (per quintal)		Quantity Procured in lakh tonnes
	Common	Grade 'A'	
2009-10	1000/-	1030/-	0.08
2010-11	1000/-	1030/-	0.16
2011-12	1080/-	1110/-	0.23
2012-13	1250/-	1280/-	*0.04

* As on 27.02.2013.