

(c) whether BPL cardholders will be able to open their accounts in bank and withdraw cash subsidy easily, whether corrupt practices would not be involved on withdrawal of cash subsidy;

(d) whether cardholders would be able to buy 35 Kg. of rice for six hundred in the market after getting cash subsidy; and

(e) whether this amount provided to cardholders would be utilised for meeting other expenditures of the household and it is feared that this amount is likely to be spent on consumption of liquor etc. and that the problems being faced by the families shall remain unresolved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) There is no provision at present for disbursement of food subsidy in cash to beneficiaries, including Below Poverty Line (BPL) cardholders, under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS).

(b) to (e) Does not arise.

Prices of food articles

2194. SHRI DEVENDER GOUD T: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons that, in spite of inflation coming down, the prices of food articles are beyond the reach of common man;

(b) what impact the increase in price of diesel has on transportation of goods; and

(c) what remedial measures, the Ministry has taken/proposed to take to contain the price of essential commodities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) As per the Wholesale Index (WPI), the rate of inflation for Food Articles group stood at 11.88% for the month of January 2013 as against 6.62% for All Commodities for the same month. Rise in prices of food articles would depend on several factors such as shortfall in domestic supply relative to demand, hardening of international prices,

changes in consumption pattern, adverse weather conditions, insufficient logistics, storage facilities etc. Hence, there could be differences between the overall rate of inflation and that of food articles.

The point contribution of High Speed Diesel Oil (HSDO) in overall inflation on a year on year basis in January 2013 was estimated at 0.74.

(c) The steps in operation by the Government to control the prices of essential commodities are given in Statement.

Statement

The Steps in operation by the Government to contain price rise in essential commodities inter-alia include the following:

- Reduced import duties to zero - for wheat, onion and pulses and to 7.5% for refined edible oils.
- Import duty on sugar has been kept at 10%.
- Banned export of edible oils (except coconut oil, forest based oil and edible oils in blended consumer packs upto 5 kg with a Minimum Export Price of USD 1500 per MT) and pulses (except Kabuli chana and organic pulses and lentils up to a maximum of 10000 tonnes per annum).
- Imposed stock limits from time to time in the case of select essential commodities such as pulses, edible oils and edible oilseeds for a period upto 30.09.2013 and in respect of paddy and rice upto 30.11.2013.
- Maintained the Central Issue Price (CIP) for rice (at Rs.5.65 per kg for BPL and Rs. 3 per kg for AAY) and wheat (at Rs.4.15 per kg for BPL and Rs. 2 per kg for AAY) since 2002.
- Suspended Futures trading in rice, urad and tur.
- To ensure adequate availability of sugar for the households covered under TPDS, the levy obligation on sugar factories was restored to 10%.
- Government allocated rice and wheat under OMSS Scheme.
- The scheme for distribution of subsidized imported pulses through PDS with a subsidy element of Rs.20/- per Kg is presently under operation.

The scheme for subsidized imported edible oils has been extended upto 30.09.2013 with subsidy of Rs.15/- per Kg.

Quality of items supplied under PDS

2195. SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the quality of various items supplied under Public Distribution System (PDS) in the States is very poor;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor, State-wise including Andhra Pradesh; and
- (c) the corrective steps being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Various items supplied under Public Distribution System (PDS) like foodgrains (Wheat, Rice and Coarse grains), sugar, kerosene etc. are procured and supplied as per prescribed norms. No complaint about supply of poor quality of sugar and kerosene has been received from any State including Andhra Pradesh. Three complaints about supply of poor quality foodgrains under PDS in Puducherry, Maharashtra and Gujarat were received during 2012-13. Details are given in Statement-I (*See* below).

(c) In order to ensure that only good quality foodgrains are issued for distribution under PDS, instructions have been issued to Food Corporation of India (FCI) and State Governments as given in Statement-II (*See* below).

The quality of sugar supplied under PDS is released as per specification ISS grade by Sugar factories.

The quality of kerosene supplied under PDS in the country through wholesale dealers of Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies is as per specification of kerosene laid down *i.e.* IS: 1459.