

Ration shops allocated to SC/ST

†2980. DR. PRABHA THAKUR : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether ration shops earmarked by Government for the people of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe society have been allocated in each State; and

(b) the States where such shops have not been allocated in full number to the people of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe categories as per rule, the State-wise details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS) : (a) and (b) As provided in the Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001, State Governments shall issue an order under Section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, for regulating sale and distribution of the essential commodities. Under the said Order, licenses to the Fair Price Shop (FPS) owners shall be issued by the designated authority appointed by the State Government. However, Government has not earmarked any quota for licensing of FPSs for specific categories including people of Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST). Hence, State/UT-wise data regarding number of FPSs earmarked and allocated to SC/ST category is not maintained in this Department.

Revision of NFSB

2981. SHRI DEVENDER GOUD T. : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry has revised the National Food Security Bill (NFSB) so as to give greater flexibility to States;

(b) if so, the details of changes proposed in the Bill;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the proposed changes allow the Central and State Governments to have another food based welfare scheme;

(d) if so, whether it does not contradict with NFSB; and

(e) if so, how the Ministry is planning to reconcile both (a) and (c)?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS) : (a) and (b) The National Food Security Bill, 2011 (NFSB) was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 22.12.2011 and thereafter referred to the Standing Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution for examination. The Standing Committee has given its report. The report has been examined by the Government in consultation with States/UTs, based on which the Government proposes to move some amendments to it. The proposed amendments in the Bill mainly aim to provide a simpler framework, offer more flexibility to State Governments and lower the financial burden on them.

(c) to (e) The NFSB *inter-alia* provides that the provisions of the Act shall not preclude the Central Government or the State Government from continuing or formulating other food based welfare schemes. This will enable States/UTs to implement other schemes for food and nutritional security of the people, out of their own resources, if they so desire, as long as the entitlements specified in the Bill are first met. Hence, there is no contradiction.

Coverage under food security bill

2982. SHRI DEVENDER GOUD T. : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has decided to extend food security to 70 per cent of the population;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any special emphasis is proposed to be made in backward districts of the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, with particular reference to Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS) : (a) and (b) The National Food Security Bill, 2011 (NFSB), as introduced in the Lok Sabha on 22.12.2011, provides for coverage of up to 75% of the rural population and up to 50% of the urban population, for subsidized foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS). This implies that about 67% of the total population will be eligible to receive subsidized foodgrains.

(c) and (d) NFSB provides that the Central and the State Governments shall, while implementing the provisions of the Act and schemes for meeting specified