

National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) is deemed to have come into force on 05.07.2013. It *inter-alia* provides for a period not exceeding 365 days after the commencement of the Act to the States/Union Territories (UTs) for identification of eligible households for receiving subsidized foodgrains under TPDS. Foodgrains under the Act has been allocated so far to 10 States/UTs, as per the progress in identification of beneficiaries reported by them. Rest of the States are at different levels of preparedness to implement the Act. These States are being persuaded to complete identification of households and other preparatory work within the stipulated time and begin implementation of the Act.

The entitlements under the Act to subsidized foodgrains and nutritional support to women and children are to be delivered through TPDS, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and Mid-Day-Meal (MDM) schemes, which are already under implementation through State/Union Territory Governments, in accordance with guidelines of respective schemes. A pilot scheme for maternity benefit *viz.* Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana is also under implementation in select districts of the country.

Financial crisis faced by farmers growing sugarcane

3037. SHRI D. RAJA:

SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the acute financial crisis being faced by farmers growing sugarcane, particularly in Uttar Pradesh, due to non-payment of remunerative prices as well as arrears and also the discontinuance of the purchase of sugarcane during the current crushing season following the decision of sugar mill owners to close down their mills; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the measures being taken to help the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) There was some delay in the crushing operations in the current sugar season over the issue of sugarcane price fixed by the States which is higher than Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) and financial problem of sugar mills. The issue has since been resolved and mills all over the country including in Uttar Pradesh are operating to their capacities.

The Central Government on 03.1.2014 has notified a scheme envisaging a financial package in the form of interest free loans worth Rs. 6600 crores as additional working

capital to sugar mills, for clearance of cane price arrears of previous sugar seasons and timely settlement of cane price of current sugar season to sugarcane farmers. Interest burden estimated at Rs. 2750 crores over next five years would be borne by the Government through Sugar Development Fund.

Initiatives on World Standards Day

3038. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN:
SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has taken any initiatives on the occasion of World Standards Day celebration held recently; and
- (b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. World Standards Day was celebrated on 14 October, 2013 throughout the country. Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) at its Headquarters and in its various offices celebrated the occasion.

Apart from holding a seminar on this years' theme 'International Standards Ensure Positive Change' following activities were undertaken:

- (i) Launching of a revamped and more user friendly BIS website.
- (ii) Release of an improved edition of 'Standards India' which is a bi-monthly journal published by BIS.

Price-rise of food articles

3039. SHRI ARVIND KUMAR SINGH:
SHRIMATI KUSUM RAI:
SHRI PRABHAT JHA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether as per the recent report of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) released in January, 2013, global food prices have fallen during 2013 but these prices have risen in India;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for the same;