

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAOSAHEB DADARAO DANVE): (a) No Sir.

(b) and (c) In view of above question does not arise.

Revamping the PDS

3075.SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has decided to notify revised poverty estimates on the basis of which States can undertake proper identification of beneficiaries under PDS, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government is considering to use biometric technology to include eligible beneficiaries and weed out ineligible ones, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the conference of Secretaries of State Food Departments made crucial recommendations for revamping the system and ensuring that grains reach the beneficiaries;

(d) if so, the details of recommendations made in this regard; and

(e) the action taken by Government to implement them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAOSAHEB DADARAO DANVE): (a) Government has notified the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) on 10.09.2013, which *inter alia* provides for coverage of upto 75% of the rural population and upto 50% of the urban population of the country for receiving foodgrains at subsidized prices under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS). Under NFSA, coverage under TPDS has been delinked from poverty estimates and corresponding to the above coverage at the all India level, State-wise coverage has been determined by the Planning Commission on the basis of National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) data for 2011-12 on consumption expenditure. Under the NFSA, the identification of eligible households is to be done by the respective State/UT Governments. As all States/UTs are required to implement NFSA, there is no proposal under consideration to notify revised poverty estimates for existing TPDS.

(b) Under the scheme of End-to-end Computerization of TPDS Operations, all States/UTs are *inter-alia* to digitise the ration card/ beneficiary data as per e-Gov standards and also to seed available Aadhaar numbers, which are linked to biometric data. This will help in weeding out bogus/ineligible beneficiaries and including the eligible beneficiaries.

(c) to (e) This Department has been organizing Conferences with the Secretaries of State/UT Food Departments from time to time on various issues including revamping and improving the implementation of TPDS in States/UTs. In the Conferences, the recommendations made relate among others to correct identification of beneficiaries, doorstep delivery of foodgrains upto Fair Price Shops (FPSs), end-to-end computerization of TPDS operations, increasing the viability of FPSs, etc. The recommendations made during the Conferences are shared with States/UTs for corrective action to be taken to improve the functioning of TPDS. Reports on these points are also obtained from the States/UTs on regular basis, which are reviewed in the Department.

Functioning of consumer courts

†3076. SHRI VIJAY GOEL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that functioning of consumer courts is not satisfactory, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government proposes to amend the existing Consumer Protection Act. if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether all the posts of President and members in the consumer courts/forums have been filled up, and if not, by when these posts are likely to be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAOSAHEB DADARAO DANVE): (a) Yes, Sir, the statement of pendency in Consumer Courts is given in Statement (*See* below) which shows that the disposal of cases by the Consumer Courts needs to improve.

(b) The Government proposes to amend the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 and is consulting various stake holders in the matter, but no final view has been taken.

(c) No, Sir. In accordance with the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, the State Governments/UTs are responsible to fill up the post of the President/Members of the concerned State Commission and District Forums of the State/UTs. Vacancies arise from time to time due to retirement, resignation, etc. and concerned State Governments take steps to fill such vacancies. However, the Department has been advising the State Governments/UTs from time to time to fill up the vacancies expeditiously.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.