

Untimely arrival of foodgrains in PDS shops

†381. SHRI RAM NATH THAKUR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that foodgrains are provided every month to each BPL family through Public Distribution System (PDS) shops in the country, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government is aware of the fact that godown managers do not provide foodgrains to PDS shops in time every month saying that foodgrains have not arrived, as a result of which, the poor have to purchase foodgrains meant for two months in one go; and

(c) whether Government proposes to make any arrangement for timely arrival of foodgrains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) After implementation of National Food Security Act (NFSA), criteria of identification of beneficiaries/households has been de-linked from Below Poverty Line/Above Poverty Line categories and beneficiaries are identified under two categories namely; (i) AAY Households and (ii) Priority Households.

(b) and (c) Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State/UT Governments. Central Government is responsible for procurement, allocation and transportation of foodgrains upto the designated depots of the Food Corporation of India (FCI). The operational responsibilities including delivery of foodgrains upto doorsteps of the Fair Price Shops for distribution to eligible households rest with the concerned State/UT Governments.

Allocation Orders of foodgrains are issued by the Department of Food and Public Distribution well in advance of the month to which the allocation pertains. To ensure availability of sufficient quantity of foodgrains for distribution under TPDS, State Governments are required to lift the foodgrains from the FCI by the last day of the month preceding the allocation month.

NFSA has provisions for reforms in the TPDS to be undertaken progressively by the Central/State Governments in consonance with the roles envisaged in the Act, which *inter alia* include doorstep delivery of foodgrains, application of ICT tools, leveraging Aadhaar for unique identification, full transparency of records, preference to public institutions or public bodies etc. in Fair Price Shop (FPS) licensing etc.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

The Act also provides for Grievance Redressal Mechanism at District and State levels for effective redressal of grievances of the beneficiaries.

Difference in wholesale and retail prices of essential commodities

382. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the huge difference in wholesale and retail prices of essential commodities and various vegetables which causes a lot of problems for the weaker sections of the society;

(b) if so, whether Government proposes to regulate retail prices of essential commodities and vegetables sold in the market with a view to provide relief to the consumers and if so, the details thereof and by when; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) Difference in wholesale and retail price depends on factors such as transportation cost, loading/unloading expenses, grading/shorting, wholesaler's margin, wastages during movement/weighting, location of retail shops, fixed overhead expenses of retailers and margin of retailers etc.

(b) and (c) Under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 State Governments are empowered to control the prices at which any essential commodity may be bought or sold.

Consumer Mela to redress consumer grievances

383. SHRI D. KUPENDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has recently conducted a Consumer Mela inviting regulators and industry together to redress consumer grievances;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the outcome of such Mela; and

(c) whether Government plans to organise such Consumer Melas in future all over the country, if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) Yes Sir.