

on an all India basis, aims to supplement the food requirements of upto 75% of the rural and 50% of the urban population. While Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households, which constitute poorest of the poor are entitled to 35 kg of foodgrains per family per month, priority households are entitled to 5 kg. of foodgrains per person per month at uniform subsidized prices of ₹ 3/2/1 per kg. for rice/wheat/coarse grains respectively. Special provisions have also been made for pregnant women and lactating mothers and children in the age group of 6 months to 14 years, by entitling them to receive nutritious meal free of cost through a widespread network of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Centres, called Anganwadi Centres under ICDS scheme and also through schools under Mid-Day-Meal (MDM) scheme.

In order to ensure proper functioning of the Act, reforms in the Targeted Public Distribution System are being undertaken in consonance with Section 12 of the Act. Some of these reforms include digitization of ration cards/beneficiaries database, seeding of unique identification numbers (Aadhaar) in digitized database, online allocation of foodgrains, computerization of Supply Chain Management, automation of Fair Price Shops, portability of ration cards, full transparency of records and putting in place of a strong Grievance redressal machinery.

Construction of godowns in Punjab

2303. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government of Punjab has sought permission of the Centre to construct 20 lakh metric tonne capacity godowns in the State in view of shortage of covered storage capacity;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether they would be covered under the guarantee of the Central Government and the Food Corporation of India; and
- (d) if so, the efforts made by the Ministry to ease out the crisis of acute shortage of covered storage space this year in Punjab?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DANVE RAOSAHEB DADARAO): (a) to (d) Government of Punjab has requested for construction of additional 20 lakh MT capacity. However, Government of India has decided to augment the storage capacity in Punjab by way of construction of silos rather than conventional storage as a long term solution.

Steel silos storage with bulk handling facility can be operated round the clock which not only brings in flexibility and improves overall efficiency, but also ensures better preservation of foodgrains and enhances its shelf life.

Accordingly, Government of India has also approved an action plan for construction of steel silos in the country for a capacity of 100 LMT in Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode. As on 30.06.2019, a total capacity of 43.75 LMT has been planned in Punjab. Against this, a capacity of 2.75 LMT of steel silos has been created.

Introduction of new standard weighing system

2304. SHRI A. VIJAYAKUMAR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether any new standard weighing system has been introduced in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether any target period has been fixed to switch over to the new weighing system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DANVE RAOSAHEB DADARAO): (a) to (c) No new standard of weighing system has been introduced in the country. However, Government is aware that the International Bureau of Weights and Measures overhauled the definition of a kilogram as well as all the other basic units of measurement based on physical constants. The Government has examined these changes and supported the proposal for change in definitions of these units.

Aadhaar-based exclusion from PDS

2305. SHRI RITABRATA BANERJEE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware of/has a list of hunger deaths in the country, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether any of these can be attributed to exclusion from Public Distribution System;
- (c) whether Aadhaar-based exclusions are a key reason for this, if so, the details thereof; and