

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DANVE RAOSAHEB DADARAO): (a) Yes Sir, the draft rules have been uploaded in the Department's website inviting comments/ views from the stakeholders.

(b) The suggestions broadly relate to draft rules on e-Commerce, Mediation, Direct Selling, Qualification for appointment, method of recruitment, procedure of appointment, term of office, resignation and removal of the President and members of the State Commission and District Commission etc.

(c) and (d) There is provision in the Consumer Protection Regulations 2005 for listing & disposal of cases filed by or against senior citizens, physically challenged, widows & persons suffering from serious ailments on priority basis.

Review of Food Policy

2155. LT. GEN. (DR.) D.P. VATS (RETD.): Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has a proposal to review the country's food policy, especially the distribution system to achieve "Zero Hunger" across the country, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether people living in rural areas have to depend on the Public Distribution System (PDS) due to the drought/flood situation prevailing in some parts of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DANVE RAOSAHEB DADARAO): (a) and (b) There is no proposal to review the country's food policy. Government of India enacted National Food Security Act (NFSA) which came into force *w.e.f.* July, 2013. NFSA provides for coverage of upto 75% of the rural population and upto 50% of the urban population for receiving foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), thus covering about two-thirds of the population of the country for receiving foodgrains @ Rs 1/2/3 per kg for nutri-cereals/wheat/rice respectively. Identification of beneficiaries under the Act is under two categories- households covered under Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) and Priority Households (PHH), within the coverage determined for the State/UT. While Priority Households are entitled to receive 5 kg per person per month, AAY households, which constitute the poorest of the poor, continue to receive 35 Kg.

of foodgrains per household per month. At present, the Act is being implemented in all the States/UTs covering about 80 crore persons to get highly subsidized foodgrains. The coverage under the Act is substantially high to ensure that all the vulnerable and needy sections of the society get its benefit.

The Government of India makes additional allocation of foodgrains for natural calamities based on the request of State/UT Govt. As per the extant norms, in case of natural calamities, the allocation of foodgrains for 3 months of demand can be made to the States/UTs on the basis of the request received so that the relief measures are not affected.

The implementation of NFSA through the Public Distribution System (PDS) is a joint responsibility of the Central and State Governments/UT Administrations, and the State Governments/UT Administrations are responsible for the identification of beneficiaries under the NFSA. The scheme of End-to-End Computerization of the PDS has ensured rightful targeting of the beneficiaries all over the country. Further, Government of India has issued advisories to all States/UTs to identify and cover the weakest sections of the society under PDS and launch special drives to issue ration cards to them. Advisories have been issued to all State/UTs that no beneficiary/household shall be deleted from the list of eligible beneficiaries/households only on the grounds of not possessing Aadhaar and shall also not be denied subsidized foodgrains or cash transfer of food subsidy under NFSA due to non-availability of Aadhaar or failure of biometric authentication.

Aadhaar-based technical improvements in PDS

†2156. SHRI P.L. PUNIA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) the States that have adopted Aadhaar-based technical improvements in PDS model in the country, the State-wise details thereof;
- (b) whether it is a fact that many States are facing pressure even after adopting the said technical improvements, if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether Government proposes to do away with the Aadhaar based technical improvements in PDS mode, if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.