

(c) and (d) With the carry over stock of about 145 lakh MT of previous sugar season and estimated production of about 273 Lakh MT in current sugar season 2019-20, the availability of sugar is sufficient to meet the domestic consumption of about 260 lakh MT. In view of sufficient availability of sugar in the country, the sugar prices in the domestic market are expected to remain stable.

Introduction of pan India ration card

714. SHRI MANAS RANJAN BHUNIA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Central Government has planned to introduce pan India Ration Card;
- (b) if so, the operational mode to introduce pan India Ration Card; and
- (c) the proposed role of the State Governments in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DANVE RAOSAHEB DADARAO): (a) to (c) No, Sir. Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State/Union Territory (UT) Governments. The Central Government is responsible for procurement, allocation and transportation of foodgrains up to the designated depots of the Food Corporation of India. Whereas, the operational responsibilities for allocation and distribution of foodgrains within the States/UTs, identification of eligible households/beneficiaries under NFSA, issuance of ration cards to them and licensing and monitoring of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) rest with the concerned State/UT Governments. However, for sake of uniformity, States/UTs have been suggested to adopt a standard format of ration card only when they decide to print/issue new ration cards in future under NFSA.

Services of doctors and lawyers under Consumer Protection Act

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

- (a) whether services provided by lawyers and doctors are covered under the purview of Consumer Protection Act, 2019;