

(b) whether it is also a fact that vacancies in National Consumer Distress Redressal Commission, State Commissions and District Forums runs into thousands;

(c) if so, how the Ministry looks at the pendency of cases and the steps taken/ proposed to be taken to fill the vacancies so as to reduce pendency of cases; and

(d) whether the Ministry would give advisory to all Departments, PSUs, etc., not to appeal in cases of petty fines?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) 'Petty cases' is not defined in the Consumer Protection Act, 1986. In terms of Section 11 of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, the cases where the value of the goods or services and the compensation, if any, claimed does not exceed rupees twenty lakhs are to be filed in the District Consumer Disputes Redressal Fora. From the jurisdiction point of view, every matter irrespective of its value has to be decided on its merits, in terms of the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986

(b) and (c) As per information received from all the State Commissions total 670 posts of President and Members of the Consumer Fora are lying vacant. Out of 1 post of President and 11 posts of Member in the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC), at present, 4 posts of Member are vacant. Vacancy circular for filling up these posts has already been issued by the Central Government with last date of receiving of application as 30.03.2020. Furthermore, under the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, State Governments are required to fill up the vacancies of President and Member in the State Commissions and the District Fora. The Central Government keeps advising the State Governments/UTs from time to time to initiate action for filling up of the vacancies well in time.

(d) There is no such proposal.

#### **Implementation of 'One Nation, One Ration Card' scheme**

3120. SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has proposed to introduce the 'One Nation, One Ration Card' scheme and if so, the details thereof;

(b) the targets set for the same and the State-wise status of implementation, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of people in the country who are eligible for ration card, the number of people who do not have one and the number of applications for the same pending with the Ministry, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b) Under PDS reforms, a scheme on "Integrated Management of Public Distribution System (IM-PDS)" is being implemented w.e.f. April 2018 in all States/UTs. The main objective of the scheme is to introduce nation-wide portability of ration card holders under National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA), through 'One Nation One Ration Card' system. This system enables the migratory ration card holders to lift their entitled foodgrains from any Fair Price Shop (FPS) of their choice in the country by using their existing/same ration card issued in their home State/UT after biometric authentication on electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) devices installed at the FPSs. So far, the facility of inter-State/national portability under One Nation One Ration Card plan has been made functional in 12 States. Further, integration of remaining States/UTs depends on their readiness to implement the same.

(c) The Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is governed under the provisions of the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA); which is implemented in all States/UTs. The NFSA provides coverage for about 81 crore persons to receive subsidised foodgrains through TPDS, which is about 2/3rd of the country's population as per census 2011. Presently, under NFSA, all States/UTs collectively, have issued about a total of 23 crore ration cards to nearly 80 crore beneficiaries.

Further, TPDS is operated in joint responsibilities of central State/UT Governments where in *inter-alia* the operational responsibilities of identification of eligible households/beneficiaries under NFSA as per the criteria evolved by them, issuance of ration cards, etc. rests with the concerned State/UT Governments. Therefore as and when any matter/issues, including request for new ration card is received in this

Department, the same is forwarded to concerned State/UT Government for appropriate action at their end.

**Payment for ration provided to Kerala during floods**

3121. SHRI ELAMARAM KAREEM: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the Central Government has asked the State of Kerala to pay for the ration provided during the floods;
- (b) the details of such ration provided to the State of Kerala and the amount of money asked by the Central Government; and
- (c) whether the Central Government is thinking to waive off this due, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As per extant norms of Government of India, Department of Food and Public Distribution has made the additional allocation of 89540 MT rice to Kerala at MSP derived rates for flood relief during August, 2018. In this regard, Food Corporation of India (FCI) had submitted the bills of ` 205.81 crore for the additional allocation made by this Department for flood relief, 2018.

(c) No, Sir. The bills which had been forwarded by this Department to Ministry of Home Affairs in original for reimbursement of the amount to FCI. Further, Ministry of Home Affairs has forwarded the bills of ` 205.81 crore submitted by FCI to State Govt. of Kerala for necessary payment.

**Timely and efficient procurement and distribution of foodgrains**

3122. DR. VINAY P. SAHASRABUDDHE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) the new initiatives/measures which have been undertaken by the Ministry