

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2390
ANSWERED ON:13.03.2006
COMMITTEE FOR ENQUIRY IN NON -AVAILABILITY OF FOODGRAINS
Athawale Shri Ramdas

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken any step to appoint a special commission/committee to enquire into the non-availability of foodgrains (rice and wheat) allotted under various central schemes to the poor and the needy persons in various States;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, the other remedial steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH)

(a): No Sir.

(b): does not arise.

(c): The Targetted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State Government. The responsibility for distribution of foodgrains to the beneficiaries lies with the State Governments.

A system to monitor distribution of foodgrains under TPDS is already in place. Planning and despatch of the required number of rakes of foodgrains is made by the FCI every month for each consuming State/UT at an optimally feasible level, within the constraints of availability of rakes and other logistics in order to adequately cater to the requirements of each State/UT under the TPDS and other Welfare Schemes and with the aim of building up and maintaining the stock level equivalent to three month's average requirement (two months in respect of NE Region). On receipt of any report regarding depletion of stock, the FCI is advised to prioritize the induction of rakes to such State/UT and whenever required, the Railway Board is also requested to take appropriate remedial action to augment the supply and induction of the rakes.

The following measures have also been taken by the Government to reach the foodgrains to the beneficiaries :-

- (i) The Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001 was issued in order to streamline the functioning of the PDS and to make the same more effective and accountable. Any offence committed in violation of the provisions of the Order invokes criminal liability under Section 7 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.
- (ii) The State Governments and the Union Territory Administrations have been asked to actively involve the Panchayati Raj Institutions to monitor the functioning of the Fair Price Shops, as a measure of social audit.
- (iii) The State and Union Territories have also been asked to constitute Vigilance Committees at the State, District, Block and FPS levels to oversee the functioning of PDS.
- (iv) With a view to efficiently reaching PDS commodities to the consumers in a transparent manner, a model Citizen's Charter has been issued by the Central Government for adoption by the State Governments/UT Administration.
- (v) Under the Area Officers Scheme, the Senior Officers of the Government visits their allocated States/UTs to conduct review of the TPDS. The observations made by the Area Officers in their reports are sent to the concerned State Government/UT for taking necessary action.
- (vi) In the Regional Conferences held recently at Mumbai, Shimla, Thiruvananthapuram, Kolkata and Guwahati, the State Governments/UTs have been asked to take immediate necessary steps to curb diversion, through inspections, computerization and effective implementation of PDS Control Order.