

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2985

ANSWERED ON:15.03.2016

Leakages in PDS

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

- (a) whether a large number of cases regarding irregularities and diversion of various items have been reported under the Public Distribution System (PDS) recently in certain States, if so, the details thereof indicating the number of cases reported and the items diverted during the last three years State-wise;
- (b) whether any investigation has been conducted in this regard, if so the details and outcome thereof; and
- (c) whether steps have been taken or any new model has been introduced to check corruption and bring transparency in functioning of PDS, if so, the details and the result thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN)

(a) : Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State/Union Territory (UT) Governments wherein operational responsibilities for allocation of foodgrains within the States/UTs, identification of eligible Below Poverty Line (BPL) families, issuance of ration cards to them and supervision over and monitoring of functioning of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) rest with the concerned State/UT Governments.

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There have been reports about irregularities in implementation of TPDS in certain regions/States in the country. As and when complaints are received by the Government from individuals and organizations as well as through press reports, they are sent to State/UT Governments concerned for inquiry and appropriate action. A statement indicating State-wise number of complaints on TPDS received in the department from 2013 to 2016 (upto January, 2016) is at Annexure -I.

(b): In order to maintain supplies and securing availability and distribution of essential commodities, Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001 and TPDS(Control) Order, 2015 have been notified. Both control orders mandate the State and UT Governments to carry out all required action to ensure smooth functioning of TPDS. An offence committed in violation of the provisions of both these Order is liable for penal action under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. Reports are being sought periodically from State/UT Governments regarding irregularities in TPDS and action taken on such cases by them under relevant clauses of PDS(Control) Orders. State-wise details regarding action taken by States/UTs during the last three years and current year are at Annexure-II.

(c): Department of Food and Public Distribution has implemented a Plan on Scheme 'End-to-end Computerisation of TPDS Operations' under 12th Five Year Plan (2012-17) on cost sharing basis with the States/UTs. Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved Component-I of the Scheme in October, 2012 with funding requirement of Rs. 884.07 crore during 2012-17, which includes Government of India's share of Rs. 489.37 crore and States/UTs share of Rs. 394.70 crore. Costs are being shared on 90:10 basis in respect of North Eastern States and on 50:50 basis with other States/UTs. Component-I of the Scheme comprises activities, namely, digitization of ration cards/beneficiary and other databases, computerisation of supply-chain management, setting up of transparency portals and grievance redressal mechanisms. The Department conveyed administrative approval for the scheme to all States/UTs on 10.12.2012. National Informatics Centre (NIC) is the technical partner under the scheme.

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Ration Cards have been completely digitized in all States/UTs except Himachal Pradesh. AADHAR seeding has been achieved for more than 45% of total number of Ration Cards. 21 States/UTs have started online allocation of Food Grains. Grievance Redressal Mechanism/Toll Free Telephone number for Grievance Redressal has also been put in place in all State/UTs.

TPDS (C) Order 2015 provides that all Targeted Public Distribution System related records shall be placed in the public domain and kept open for inspection to the public in the manner as may be prescribed by the State Government.

Every local authority, or any other authority or body, as may be authorised by the State Government, shall conduct or cause to be conducted, periodic social audits on the functioning of Targeted Public Distribution System, and cause to publicise its findings and take necessary action, in such manner as may be prescribed by the State Government.
