

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
RAJYA SABHA
QUESTION NO 12.11.2010
ANSWERED ON
BLACK MARKETING OF PDS RATION IN NORTH EASTERN STATES .

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SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS

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

- (a) whether Government is aware of the report of National Council for Applied Economic Research which states that there is a huge financial scam in the field of Public Distribution System in last few years in Assam;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether in last few years thousands of metric tonnes of rice, wheat, sugar, salt meant for BPL families has been sold in black market in various States in NE Region including Assam;
- (d) whether Government has any proposal for high level enquiry into such PDS scam and to book the culprit; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

(PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a) to (e): The concurrent evaluation of Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) was done by National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER) in 12 States. In the concurrent evaluation study reports of these States, certain shortcomings in the functioning of TPDS, such as inclusion/exclusion errors and leakages/ diversion of foodgrains were pointed out, including in the States of NE Region, namely, Assam and Mizoram.

The evaluation reports have been sent to the concerned State/UT Governments for taking necessary action to streamline the functioning of TPDS, including the action to eliminate leakages/diversion of foodgrains.

Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of Central Government and State/Union Territory (UT) Governments. The Central Government is responsible for procurement, allocation and transportation of foodgrains upto the designated depots of the Food Corporation of India. The operational responsibilities for lifting and distributing the allocated foodgrains within the States/UTs, identification of eligible Below Poverty Line (BPL) families, issuance of ration cards to them and supervision over distribution of allocated foodgrains to eligible card holders through the fair price shops (FPSs) are that of the State/UT Governments. Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001 mandates the State and UT Governments to carryout all required action to ensure smooth functioning of TPDS. An offence committed in violation of the provisions of this Order is liable for penal action under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. In order to check hoarding and black-marketing of essential commodities, powers have also been vested with State Governments for taking action under the provisions of Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and Prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980.

Complaints as and when received by government from individuals and organizations, as well as through press reports about functioning of TPDS including leakages/diversion of TPDS commodities are sent to the concerned State/UT Governments for inquiry and action.

Strengthening and streamlining of TPDS is a continuous process. To improve functioning of TPDS, Government has been regularly requesting State/UT Governments for continuous review of lists of BPL and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families; ensuring timely availability of foodgrains at fair price shops; ensuring greater transparency in functioning of TPDS; improved monitoring and vigilance at various levels; and introduction of new technologies such as Computerization of TPDS operations at various levels.