

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
RAJYA SABHA
QUESTION NO 12.11.2010
ANSWERED ON
FOOD SECURITY BILL .

531

SHRI N.K. SINGH

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

- (a) whether Government has the intention to revamp the ailing Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS);
- (b) whether Government has proposed introduction of food coupons to replace the current system;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) by when Government is expected to bring the Food Security Bill to the Parliament for consideration; and
- (e) the parties that are being consulted to draft the Food Security Bill?

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): 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 carry out all required action to ensure smooth functioning of TPDS. 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 AAY families, ensuring timely availability of foodgrains at FPSs, 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.

In the Conference of Food Secretaries of States and UTs on Best Practices and Reforms in TPDS held on 12th & 13th July, 2010, various issues relating to TPDS were discussed and it was resolved, among others, to ensure proper identification of beneficiaries, timely distribution of foodgrains, increase viability of FPSs, enhancing storage capacities, use of technology based initiatives in TPDS and increase public awareness.

(b) & (c): There is no proposal to replace the current system of distribution of foodgrains with food coupons under TPDS.

(d) & (e): An Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM) has been constituted to examine all aspects of the proposed National Food Security Bill. The EGoM will also consider the recommendations of National Advisory Council (NAC) and other stakeholders. Based on the directions of the EGoM, draft National Food Security Bill will be prepared and further action taken to bring in the legislation.