

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1161
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10TH FEBRUARY, 2026

REVIEWING PDS COMPLAINTS IN ERODE

1161: SHRI ANTHIYUR P. SELVARASU:

Will the Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution be pleased to state:

- (a): whether Government has reviewed Public Distribution System (PDS) complaints in Erode district, Tamil Nadu, including Bhavani and Gobichettipalayam, relating to Rice quality, quantity and delivery regularity through Fair Price Shops;
- (b): if so, the details of Government inspections, shop-wise action, penalty proceedings, sample testing, complaint disposal statistics and monitoring mechanism in Erode district; and
- (c): the measures proposed to be taken by Government to strengthen transparency, social audits, biometric authentication integrity and strict quality control in the said district?

A N S W E R
MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS,
FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRIMATI NIMUBEN JAYANTIBHAI BAMBHANIYA)

(a) & (b): Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) under National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013 is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State/Union Territory (UT) Governments. The operational responsibilities for allocation of foodgrains within the States/ UTs, identification of eligible beneficiaries, issuance of ration cards to them, distribution of foodgrains to eligible beneficiaries under TPDS, issuance of license to Fair Price Shop dealers, supervision over and monitoring of functioning of FPSs etc. rest with the concerned State/ UT Governments. Further, as and when any type of complaints/ grievances related to TPDS are received in this Department from any source, they are sent to concerned State/ UT Governments for inquiry and appropriate action.

Regular surveillance, monitoring, inspection and random sampling of various food products under the Public Distribution System are being carried out by the Food Safety Departments of the respective States/UTs to check compliance with the quality and safety parameters laid down under Food Safety and Standards Act 2006 and Regulations made there under. Further, there is a

network of 246 National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) accredited and Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) empanelled laboratories to carry out testing of samples drawn. In addition, there are 24 notified Referral Food Laboratories for the analysis of appellate samples. These labs serve as appellate laboratories when there is a dispute or appeal regarding test results from primary labs.

Any Food Business Operators (FBOs) found in contravention of the provisions of the FSS Act, 2006, and Regulations made thereunder face penal actions as per the provisions of the Act.

(c): In order to ensure transparency and accountability in targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), the National Food Security Act, 2013 provides for periodic social audits on the functioning of Fair Price Shops, TPDS and other welfare schemes through local authority or any other authority or body as may be authorized by the State Government. In addition, section 29 of the Act provides for constitution of vigilance committees at the State, District, Block and Fair Price Shops level for ensuring transparency and proper functioning of the TPDS and accountability of the functionaries in the system.

As part of the technology driven TPDS reforms with the aim to enhance transparency and efficiency in the TPDS, ration cards/beneficiaries database have completely digitized (100%) in all States/UTs. The transparency portal and online grievance redressal facility/ Toll- free number is available in all States/UTs. Further, for better tracking of foodgrains distribution, 99.8% Fair Price Shops (FPSs) have been automated by installing ePoS devices for the distribution of foodgrains in a transparent manner (electronically) through biometric/Aadhaar authentication of beneficiaries. Also, the Mera Ration App has been launched by the Department of Food and Public Distribution (DFPD), which enhances transparency and accessibility in Public Distribution System. It allows beneficiaries to log in using the Aadhaar number of the Head of the Family and view ration entitlements centrally. Further, the Department has formulated and issued a Quality Control Manual to uniformly maintain the quality standards of foodgrains from procurement, storage and its distribution to the eligible beneficiaries through various social security programmes of GoI.
