

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

**LOK SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1176  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2021**

**IRREGULARITIES IN PDS**

**1176. SHRI M. SELVARAJ:  
SHRI RAHUL KASWAN:**

**Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether complaints have been received regarding irregularities/diversion/ corruption in the Public Distribution System (PDS);
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon during each of the last three years and the current year, State-wise;
- (c) whether the Government has conducted any review/assessment of PDS in the recent past and if so, the details and the outcome thereof along with the action taken thereon;
- (d) whether the Government has taken or proposes to take any fresh steps for strengthening and streamlining of PDS and if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Government has put in place any mechanism for disposal of complaints regarding corruption in PDS and if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) whether there is any system of checking the quality of food products distributed under PDS and if so, the details thereof?

**A N S W E R**

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION  
(SHRI DANVE RAOSAHEB DADARAO)**

(a) & (b): The Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibilities of the Central and the State/UT Governments, wherein the operational responsibilities, such as identification of beneficiaries/ households under the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA), issuance of ration cards to them, allocation of foodgrains to all Fair Price Shops (FPSs), distribution to beneficiaries, licensing & monitoring of FPSs, grievance redressal of beneficiaries including irregularities/corruption in TPDS operations, diversion of foodgrains, etc. lies with the concerned State/UT government. However, as and when any complaints are received in this Department from individuals, organizations as well as through media reports regarding any irregularities in the functioning of the TPDS are forwarded to the concerned State/UT Government for inquiry and appropriate action at their end. A State/UT wise statement showing number of complaints received in this Department during the last three years is at Annexure -I.

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Further, an offence committed in violation of the provisions of the TPDS (Control) Order, 2015 is liable for penal action under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. Thus, the Order empowers all State/UT Governments to take punitive actions in case of contravention of the relevant provisions of the Order. During the last three years 2018 to 2020, actions pertaining to number of FPS licenses suspended/cancelled/ show-cause notices issued/ FIRs lodged by States/UTs in a total of about 19,410 cases so far.

(c): The Department had engaged 26 esteemed institutions/ universities as Monitoring Institutions (MIs) for conducting the 'Concurrent Evaluation of the implementation of NFSA' in States/UTs during 2018-20. The quarterly reports were shared with the respective States/UTs for remedial action, if any highlighted by MIs in the key areas of beneficiary management, FPS automation, supply chain management, portability of ration cards, cash transfers, etc. Taking a step forward, for the period 2020-23, the Department has engaged 12 MIs for concurrent evaluation exercise in States/UTs on thematic basis.

(d & e): To bring reforms in the functioning of TPDS, the Department in association with all States/UTs had implemented a scheme on 'End-to-End Computerization of TPDS Operations', comprising – digitization of ration cards/beneficiaries' data, computerization of supply chain management of foodgrains, setting up of online grievance redressal mechanisms & toll free helplines and the installation of electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) devices at the Fair Price Shops (FPSs) for transparent and efficient distribution of highly subsidised foodgrains to the targeted beneficiaries/ households under NFSA. Besides, Aadhaar seeding of beneficiaries with their ration cards is also being done to enable rightful targeting of beneficiaries. Presently, more than 70% of monthly allocated foodgrains to States/UTs are being distributed to beneficiaries through biometrically authenticated ePoS transactions on monthly basis. Further, portability of ration cards under One Nation One Ration Card plan is also enabled in 32 States/UTs potentially enabling about 69 Crore (86% NFSA population) to lift their foodgrains from any FPS of their choice in these States/UTs.

(f): The Department has issued following instructions to all States/UTs and FCI to ensure the supply of good quality foodgrains under PDS:

- i) Only good quality foodgrains free from insect infestation and conforming to Food Safety Standards shall be issued under TPDS and other welfare schemes.