

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1416
TO BE ANSWERED ON 4TH DECEMBER, 2024

EVALUATION OF THE PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

1416. 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 the Government has evaluated the Public Distribution System (PDS) and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has taken any steps to strengthen the PDS and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has created any mechanism to redress complaints received regarding corruption in the PDS and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) whether the Government is considering to provide cooking gas or smokeless fuel under the PDS and if so, the details thereof?

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

(a): The Department of Food & Public Distribution engaged Monitoring Institutions (MIs) of repute to undertake a concurrent evaluation of the implementation of the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) in different States/UTs for Phase-I (2018-20) and Phase-II (2020-23). Reports submitted by the MIs are available in the public domain at https://nfsa.gov.in/portal/Concurrent_Evaluation.

(b): As part of the technology-driven Public Distribution System (PDS) reforms, to improve the efficiency and transparency of the PDS and to address various challenges such as leakages and diversion of foodgrains, ration cards/beneficiaries databases have been completely digitized in all States/UTs. The transparency portal and online grievance redressal facility/Toll-free number have been implemented in all States/UTs. Also, the online allocation has been implemented in all States/UTs (except UTs of Chandigarh, Puducherry and urban areas of Dadra & Nagar Haveli which have adopted the DBT Cash Transfer scheme) and the supply chain has been computerized in 31 States/UTs. Further, nearly 5.41 Lakh out of a total of 5.43 Lakh Fair Price Shops (FPSs) in the country have been automated by installing ePoS devices for the distribution of foodgrains in a transparent manner (electronically) through biometric/ Aadhaar authentication of beneficiaries.

(c): Public Distribution System (PDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and State/ UT Governments. Central Govt. is responsible for procurement, allocation and transportation of foodgrains up to the designated depots of the FCI. The operational responsibilities i.e. allocation and distribution of foodgrains within the States/UTs, identification of eligible beneficiaries/ families, issuance of ration cards to them and supervision and monitoring of functioning of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) rest with the concerned State/ UT Government. Helpline number 1967/1800-State series number is operational in all the States/ UTs for contacting and redressal of the complaints in the Public Distribution System and filing any type of complaints by the intended beneficiaries. Moreover, as and when complaints including corruption are received in this Department from any source, they are sent to concerned State/ UT Governments for inquiry and appropriate action.

(d): No such proposal is under consideration.
