

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.3194
TO BE ANSWERED ON 19TH MARCH, 2025

LEAKAGE OF GRAINS UNDER PDS

3194. DR. BACHHAV SHOBHA DINESH:

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

- (a) whether the Government has initiated any action, to ensure that all grains supplied reach the beneficiaries and if so, the details thereof; and
- (b) whether the Government is considering a shift towards Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) for better efficiency and accountability in the distribution of food subsidies 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): As part of the technology driven Public Distribution System (PDS) reforms, with the aim to improve the transparency, efficiency and reduce leakages in the Public Distribution System (PDS), the ration cards/beneficiaries database have been completely digitized (100%) in all States/UTs. The transparency portal and online grievance redressal facility/Toll-free number have been implemented in all States/UTs. Also, online allocation has been implemented in all States/UTs (except UTs of Chandigarh, Puducherry and Urban area of Dadra & Nagar Haveli, which have adopted DBT Cash Transfer scheme) and supply chain has been computerized in 31 States/UTs. Further, in other States/UTs for better tracking of foodgrains distribution, nearly 5.41 Lakh (99.6%) out of total 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 under PDS.

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(b): The scheme of cash transfer of food subsidy scheme is implemented as per provisions of the Cash Transfer of Food Subsidy Rules, 2015, notified under the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) on 21.08.2015 which inter alia provides food subsidy directly into the bank accounts of entitled households to enable purchase of entitled quantity of foodgrains from the open market. The scheme can be taken up in identified areas, subject to fulfillment of certain conditions regarding preparedness for its implementation like complete digitization and de-duplication of beneficiary database, seeding of bank account details in the digitized beneficiary database and availability of foodgrains in the open market. Identified area is defined under the Rules as State or Union Territory or any specified area within the State or Union Territory for which there is a written consent of the State Government for implementation of the scheme. It is therefore optional for the States/UTs to implement the cash transfer of food subsidy scheme or continue with distribution of foodgrains as per provisions of NFSA through fair price shops. At present, the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) (Cash Transfer) is being implemented in three UTs i.e. Chandigarh, DNH&DD and Puducherry.
