

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 28
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21ST JULY, 2015

NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY ACT

28. SHRI GOPAL SHETTY:

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

- (a) the details and the salient features of the National Food Security Act;
- (b) whether the Government is facing hurdles in implementing the above mentioned Act across the country;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the full and effective implementation of the said Act is likely to help in checking price rise; and
- (e) if so, the effective steps being taken by the Government to implement the Act effectively and check price rise and black marketing?

A N S W E R

MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN)

(a) to (e): Central Government enacted the National Food Security Act 2013 (NFSA) to provide for food and nutritional security in human life cycle approach, by ensuring access to adequate quantity of quality food at affordable prices to people to live a life with dignity. Salient features of the Act are at Annexure.

Before implementation of NFSA, States/Union Territories (UTs) are required to identify the eligible households and complete other preparatory activities. Based on the preparedness and identification of beneficiaries reported by 12 States/ UTs, foodgrains under the Act are being allocated to them. Remaining 24 States/UTs have not completed all the preparatory measures required for implementation of the Act. Foodgrains under existing Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is continuing in these States/UTs.

NFSA entitles upto 75% of the rural population and upto 50% of the urban population to receive foodgrains at subsidised prices of Rs. 3/2/1 per kg for rice/wheat/coarse grains under TPDS, thus covering about two thirds of the population of the country. The large coverage and highly subsidized prices of foodgrains under the Act is likely to help in checking prices of foodgrains.

Implementation of the Act is reviewed on a regular basis and necessary advisories are issued to States/UTs, wherever required. Various meetings/conferences have also been held with the States/UTs to review their status of preparedness for implementation of the Act and to urge them to implement the Act at the earliest. In order to ensure proper implementation of the Act, States/UTs are impressed upon to ensure proper identification of beneficiaries through a transparent and participative process, delivery of foodgrains by designated State agencies upto the door-steps of fair price shops, availability of adequate scientific storage facilities at various levels, end-to-end computerisation of TPDS operations and setting up of effective grievance redressal mechanism, among others.

The Central Government is implementing the "Prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980" through States/UTs for taking action against black-marketing of essential commodities. Central Government also delegated powers to the State Governments/UT Administrations to issue Control Orders for regulating production, distribution, pricing and other aspects of trading in respect of the commodities declared as essential. Under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, States/UTs declare stock limit in respect of the commodities declared as essential and notify it after taking concurrence of the Central Government. The States/UTs are requested from time to time to strictly enforce the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and Prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980.

Recently, a National Consultation meeting of Ministers of all States/UTs in-charge of Food and Consumer Affairs was held on 07.07.2015 in New Delhi to inter alia discuss measures necessary to ensure availability of essential commodities at reasonable prices and implementation of NFSA.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) TO (e) OF UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 28 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 21.07.2015 IN THE LOK SABHA

SALIENT FEATURES OF THE NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY ACT, 2013

- a) Seeks to address the issue of food security in a life cycle approach
- b) Coverage of upto 75% and 50% of rural and urban population, respectively under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), with entitlement of 5 kg per person per month.
- c) Entitlement of existing AAY households protected at 35 kg per household per month.
- d) Subsidised prices – Rs. 3/2/1 per kg for rice, wheat and coarse grains for a period of three years from the date of commencement of the Act and to be suitably linked to Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) thereafter.
- e) Protection of average annual offtake of foodgrains during 2010-11 to 2012-13 under normal TPDS in case annual allocation of foodgrains under the Act to any State/UT is less.
- f) Corresponding to the all India coverage, State-wise coverage to be determined by Central Government
- g) Number of persons to be covered calculated on the basis of the population estimates as per the census of which the relevant figures have been published.
- h) Within the coverage determined for each State, State Government to identify households.
- i) Pregnant women and lactating mothers entitled to nutritious meals free of charge and maternity benefit of not less than Rs. 6,000.
- j) Children in the age group of 6 months to 14 years entitled to nutritious meals free of charge under Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and Mid-day Meal (MDM) schemes.
- k) Eldest woman of the household of age 18 years or above to be the head of the household for the purpose of issuing of ration card.
- l) Grievance redressal mechanism at the District and State levels. States have the flexibility to use the existing machinery or set up separate mechanism.
- m) Central Government to provide assistance to States in meeting the expenditure incurred by them on transportation of foodgrains within the State, its handling and Fair Price Shop (FPS) dealers margin as per norms to be devised for this purpose.
- n) Provisions for transparency and accountability such as placing PDS related records in public domain, Social audit, Vigilance Committees at various levels.
- o) Provision for food security allowance to entitled beneficiaries in case of non-supply of entitled foodgrains or meals.
- p) Provision for penalty on public servant or authority, to be imposed by the State Food Commission, in case of failure to comply with the relief recommended by the District Grievance Redressal Officer.