

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

**LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO.251
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20TH DECEMBER, 2023**

QUALITY OF FOOD UNDER PDS

***251. SHRI P.V. MIDHUN REDDY:**

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 put in place any mechanism to ensure quality control over the food provided under Public Distribution System (PDS) through ration shops;**
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;**
- (c) whether any action is taken in case of violations of quality norms;**
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;**
- (e) whether any grievance redressal mechanism has been set up for filing complaints in cases of lapses in quality; and**
- (f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?**

**A N S W E R
MINISTER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY, CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD
& PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND TEXTILES
(SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL)**

(a) to (f): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF THE STARRED QUESTION NO. 251 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 20.12.2023 IN THE LOK SABHA.

(a) and (b): The foodgrain meant for central pool are procured by the Food Corporation of India (FCI) as part of Centralized Procurement and State Agencies through Decentralized Procurement strictly as per the uniform specification formulated by the Department of Food and Public Distribution. Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State/UT Governments. Central Government is responsible for procurement, allocation and transportation of foodgrains upto the designated depots of the Food Corporation of India. The operational responsibilities for intra-state allocation and distribution of foodgrains within the States/UTs, identification of eligible beneficiaries, issuance of ration cards and supervision and monitoring of the Fair Price Shops (FPSs) etc. rest with the concerned State/UT Governments. Further, Government of India has issued following instructions to State Government/UTs and Food Corporation of India (FCI) to ensure the supply of good quality foodgrains under Public Distribution System (PDS):

- Only good quality foodgrains free from insect infestation and conforming to Food Safety Standards are to be issued under TPDS and other welfare schemes.
- Ample opportunities are provided to the State Government/UT Administration to inspect the stocks prior to lifting from FCI godowns. State/UTs may ensure that officers not below the rank of Inspector are deputed for inspection of the foodgrains before their lifting from FCI godowns.
- Samples of foodgrains are to be collected and sealed from the stocks of foodgrains to be issued under the TPDS jointly by FCI and State Government/UT Administration.
- An officer not below the rank of Inspector is to be deputed from State Government to take the delivery of foodgrains stocks from FCI godowns.
- Regular inspection to check the quality of foodgrains is to be carried out by the officers of State Government.
- It is the responsibility of the concerned State Government/UT Administration to ensure that during transportation and storage at different stages in the distribution chain, the foodgrains retain the required quality specifications.
- The State Government, where the decentralized procurement is in operation, should ensure that the quality of foodgrains issued under TPDS and other welfare schemes should meet the desired standards under the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

(c) and (d): Regular surveillance, monitoring, inspection and random sampling of food products are being carried out by the machinery of Food Safety Departments of the respective States/UTs to check compliance of the standards laid down under Food Safety and Standards Act 2006, Rules and Regulations made there under. In cases, where the food samples are found to be non-conforming, penal action is initiated against the defaulting Food Business Operators as per provisions of FSS Act, Rules and Regulations made there under.

(e) and (f): Under TPDS, every State Government is required to put in place an internal grievance redressal mechanism which may include call centres, help lines, designation of nodal officers, or such other mechanism as may be prescribed. Whenever any complaints are received in this Department from any source, they are forwarded to the concerned State/UT Governments for inquiry and appropriate action at their end.
