

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO: 1149

ANSWERED ON: 01.03.2011

PRICE RISE

ANANT KUMAR HEGDE

RAJIV RANJAN (LALAN) SINGH

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

- (a) whether three executive groups were constituted by the Government to address the problem of price rise in the country;
- (b) if so, the constitution and term of reference of the said groups;
- (c) whether the individual reports of these groups have been presented to the Government;
- (d) if so, the groups whose reports have been received by December, 2010; and
- (e) the time by which reports of the rest of the groups are likely to be presented?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K. V. THOMAS)

(a): The "Core Group of Central Ministers and State Chief Ministers on Prices of Essential Commodities" in their meeting held on April 8th, 2010 under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister, constituted three Working Groups;

- (i) Working Group on Agriculture Production.
- (ii) Working Group on Consumer Affairs.
- (iii) Working Group on Food & Public Distribution.

(b): Constitution and Terms of Reference of the three Working Groups read as under:

1. Working Group on Agriculture Production comprises ;

Chief Minister, Haryana
Chief Minister, Punjab

-Chair

Chief Minister, West Bengal
Chief Minister, Bihar

Terms of reference: The Working Group on Agriculture Production will deliberate on and recommend measures for increasing agricultural production and productivity including long term policies for sustained agricultural growth. This Working Group will also deliberate on availability and management of various issues relating to inputs viz. seeds, fertilizers, water, power, credit, machinery etc. More specifically, Terms of Reference of the Group will include suggestions of strategies/plans of action, inter alia, for:

- (i) Bridging yield gaps
 - (ii) Crop specific strategies- special focus on pulses and oilseeds
 - (iii) Strengthening Input delivery mechanism for seeds, nutrients, water, credit, power
 - (iv) Gearing up extension administration
 - (v) Marketing reforms
 - (vi) Addressing land and labour related issues
- The Working Group will be serviced by the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation.

2. Working Group on Consumer Affairs comprises ;

Chief Minister, Gujarat - Chair
Chief Minister, Andhra Pradesh
Chief Minister, Maharashtra
Chief Minister, Tamilnadu

Terms of reference: The Working Group on Consumer Affairs will deliberate on and recommend measures for reducing the gap between farm gate and retail prices and better implementation of and amendment(s) to Essential Commodities Act. More specifically, Terms of Reference of the Group will include suggestions of strategies/plan of action, inter alia, for:

- (i) Increasing efficiency of distribution channels from farm to consumers
- (ii) Reducing intermediation costs and for reducing gap between farm gate and retail prices
- (iii) State intervention for retailing essential commodities at reasonable prices
- (iv) Enforcement of statutory provisions to improve availability of essential commodities at reasonable prices

The Working Group on Consumer Affairs will be serviced by the Department of Consumer Affairs.

3. Working Group on Food and Public Distribution comprises;

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission - Chair
Chief Minister, Chhattisgarh

Chief Minister, Assam
Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to Prime Minister

Terms of reference: The Working Group on Food and Public Distribution will deliberate on and recommend measures for better and effective delivery of essential commodities to the vulnerable sections of society and augmentation of warehouses & storage capacity including cold chain. More specifically, Terms of Reference of the Group will include suggestions of strategies/plan of action, inter alia, for:

- (i) Finalizing number of BPL beneficiaries
- (ii) Streamlining and strengthening TPDS
- (iii) Web enabled computerization of PDS System (including FCI godowns)
- (iv) Enhancing storage capacity

The Working Group on Food and Public Distribution will be serviced by the Department of Food and Public Distribution.

- (c): The Working Group on Agriculture Production has submitted its report.
- (d): Working Group on Agriculture Production presented their report in December 2010.
- (e): The Report of the Working Group on Consumer Affairs is expected to be submitted by 2nd March 2011. The Working Group on Food & Public Distribution has held several meetings and is yet to finalise its Report.