

Study on working of food corporation of India (FCI) & public distribution system (PDS) in relation to food grain procurement and distribution in J&K state

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ABSTRACT

Food Corporation of India (FCI) in J&K is working quite satisfactorily in spite of the difficulties faced by it in terms of storage capacity, procurement and terrorism. The timely food grain availability in the areas of Kargil, Leh and other hilly regions of Kashmir is really a challenging task which FCI (J&K) is doing satisfactorily. The average efficiency of PDS (Jammu) accounts to be 60.53 which is again a good percentage considering the fact that 97.5% of population in the state is Above Poverty Line (APL) and for APL population, the food grain prices in Fair Price Shops (FPS) are pretty similar to that prevailing in the market.

Key words : FCI, Public distribution, Food grain procurement, J&K.

INTRODUCTION

The food production in India has improved to 200 million tones and continues to remain at that level during the last few years. The country which depended upon imported food grains to feed her millions has emerged strong with exportable surpluses. It is credible performance indeed. But it is sad to note that over 300 million of our brethren remain underfed in spite of burgeoning stock of food grains. The deaths in Orissa in 2001 in spite of our overflowing public distribution system are a shameful example where parents were forced to sell their children for food.

So, today, the problem is not mainly related to the inadequacy of food grains but it is concerned with the distribution of the available food grains.

FCI established in 1965 under Food Corporation act 1964 started its functioning from 1st Jan. 1965 as the main agency of the central government. It was formally inaugurated at Madras on 14th Jan. 1965 on Pongal day (New harvest festival, traditionally celebrated in South) by the then Union minister of Food & Agriculture Sh. C Subramaniam with the following main objectives.

- Effective price support operations for safeguarding farmer's interests.
- Distribution of food grains throughout the country through Public Distribution System (PDS).
- Maintaining buffer stock to ensure national food security.
- Public Distribution System (PDS) is the largest distribution network of this type in the world with 4 lakh fair price shops (FPS). The main objectives of PDS are
- Ensuring price stability.
- Achieving an equitable distribution of essential consumer goods.

OBJECTIVES

The specific objective of this work is to determine the efficiency of PDS in relation to food grain distribution in Jammu district and in particular

1. To study the working of FCI in J&K and problems faced by it.
2. To improve the working efficiency of PDS in J&K.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Secondary data is collected from FCI (J&K) to study its working in Jammu and Kashmir state. Personal interviews were also conducted with the officials of FCI, J&K to know about the problems faced by the FCI (J&K) in terms of food grain distribution in the state. Secondary data is also collected from the Food and Supplies (F & S)

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Department, J&K to evaluate the efficiency of Public Distribution System (PDS) in Jammu district.

ANALYTICAL TECHNIQUE

The data available subjected to tabular analysis for determining the efficiency of PDS. The results have been derived on percentage basis. The reference period of the study is 2001. It takes into account the changes made in the Union budget 2000-2001.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Procurement by FCI in J&K

The state being highly deficit in food grains production, there is no significant procurement. The state agencies viz. JAKFED in Jammu and State Food Department in valley mop up whatever surplus food grains are offered by the farmers. Since the prices of food grains are ruling high in the state than the central procurement / support prices as announced by the union government, there have been no distress sale by the farmers.

Allocation to the state

As in other parts of the country, the TPDS was introduced in J&K state w.e.f. 1st June 1997. As per TPDS scheme, the vulnerable section of society are to be provided food grains at the highly subsidized rates i.e. according to this scheme, the central allocation was divided into BPL (Below Poverty Line) and APL (Above Poverty Line). The allocation of food grains under various heads for the year 1999 is presented in the table-1.

The consumers of Kashmir valley have special preference for coarse rice and for catering to their requirements, rice of common variety IR-8 is specifically being moved from U.P. Similarly, the consumers of Jammu have preferences for super fine variety and for them also rice Gr. 'A' is being arranged from Punjab state.

Supplies to Ladakh region

The full year's requirement of Leh and Kargil has been dispatched every year well within limited period of about 100 days beginning from the month of June.

The supply of food grains to the Ladakh region for 2000 is as:

Leh	:	Rice = 575 MT	Sugar = 152 MT
Kargil	:	Rice = 5500 MT	Sugar = 309 MT

Storage Capacity

The present storage capacity in the godowns of J&K is as

Jammu Division	: 52940 MT
Kashmir Division	: 48200 MT

The under construction storage godown capacity is

Jammu Division	- Udhampur district: 50,000 MT
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