



ENSURING FOOD SECURITY THROUGH REVAMPED PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

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“There are people in the world so hungry, that God cannot appear to them except in the form of bread.”
— Mahatma Gandhi

Abstract

The research paper titled “ENSURING FOOD SECURITY THROUGH REVAMPED PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM” analyses the role of PDS acting as a tool to ensure the nutritional needs of India. It briefly analyses the different stages of PDS and its gradual development in the country. Paper presents two major aspects to ensure food security. The first one is production and availability of enough food grains and other is accessibility and affordability of food grains by all, particularly by economically weaker section of the society. It has been found that India has prudently dealt with earlier aspect as Food Corporation Of India’s (FCI) godowns hold more than the mandated buffer stock of food grains. The aspect of accessibility and affordability needs to be focused. Global rankings which measure nutritional deficiencies and hunger show that India needs to put more effort. India not only needs to strengthen its PDS but also needs to ensure that age group specific nutrition is given to the population to tackle problems of malnutrition, stunting and wasting. It is found that TPDS, introduced in 1997, has given satisfactory results with only a few problems like leakages in PDS. But these problems are also being dealt effectively with the introduction of technology (Biometric-based) in Fair Price Shops and Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) schemes. Even Delhi Government is working on scheme to deliver ration on doorstep. But some reports emerged that in some states people were denied of ration due to failing of biometric (Aadhaar) authentication. It should be remembered that adoption of technology in PDS should smooth and under no circumstances beneficiaries should be denied of ration in this transition phase. Except of the few problems in the transition phase India’s PDS is on the right path to ensure food security for all.

Keywords: Public Distribution System, Public Procurement, Targeted Public Distribution System, Nutrition, Malnourishment, Buffer stock, Food Security, Food Subsidy.

Introduction

In 2015, the United Nations (UN) committed to achieving zero hunger by 2030 as its 2nd Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) under Agenda 2030. An important element of this goal is to end all forms of malnutrition, including agreed targets on childhood stunting and wasting. This represents an important progression beyond the Millennium Development Goals, where food security was defined and measured solely on the basis of basic energy requirements, and prevalence of underweight children. This new commitment has significant implications for the focus of research and policy decisions; it requires a broadening of scope beyond the traditional analysis of energy intake, and inclusion of all nutrients necessary for adequate nourishment.

India offers a potentially unique example in the development of models and mechanisms by which nutritional needs can be addressed sustainably. In 2016, India ranked 97 out of 118 on the Global Hunger Index (GHI)—this rates nations' nutritional status based on indicators of undernourishment, child wasting, stunting and mortality. Despite ranking above some of the world's poorest nations, India's reduction in malnourishment has been slow relative to its recent strong economic growth and puts it behind poorer neighboring countries; India has fallen from 80th to 97th since 2000. In 2016, 38.7% of children under five were defined as 'stunted' (of below average height), a strong indicator of chronic malnourishment in children and pregnant women, and a largely irreversible condition leading to reduced physical and mental development. Malnourishment within the adult population is also severe, with approximately 15% of the total population defined as malnourished.

Today India is not facing the problem of shortage of foodgrains but of managing the surplus. Ironically, even as the godowns of the FCI are overflowing, stray cases of starvation deaths are still being reported. A civilized society in the 21st century cannot allow this to happen. Therefore, while there is need to produce adequate food grains domestically, supplementing with imports whenever required, it is also necessary to look at the food grain distribution network. The Public Distribution System (PDS) in the country facilitates the supply of food grains to the poor at a subsidized price. However, doubts have been raised about the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of the PDS, especially in the light of the growing food subsidy and food stocks. The PDS needs to be restructured and there is a need to explore the possibility of introducing innovative ideas such as smart cards, food credit/debit cards, food stamps and decentralized procurement, to eliminate hunger and make food available to the poor wherever they may be in cost-effective manner.

There are two aspects to the paradox of overflowing godowns and vulnerable sections of society not consuming adequate food. One is the issue of having enough purchasing power or income to buy food and the other is the access to food in terms of physical availability of food. Though the overall employment generation is closely connected to efficient economic growth, there are some issues that must be kept in mind. In remote, inaccessible and backward regions both job opportunities and access to food may be constrained. In such situations, food-for-work and related schemes are necessary. These may need to be supplemented by more innovative schemes like grain banks.

FCI's 2017 data shows that FCI held foodgrains stock of 46 million tones which was 53% more than the prescribed buffer stock norm. Thus, the problem today on the food front is not one of scarcity but that of managing the surplus. In this context it is useful to start by looking at the definition of food security given by the Rome Declaration on World Food Security at the World Food Summit, held in 1996. As per the Declaration "*food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.*" Food insecurity is not the same as hunger. It is a much wider problem. Hunger is, of course, one of the main aspects of food security.

Improving the availability and access to food at the consumer level requires an understanding of how food is created and lost through its various pathways across the full agricultural supply chain. Understanding the functioning and other aspects of public distribution system (PDS) in this regard becomes important. India's public distribution system is the largest food security programme in the world, which covers nearly 60% of the population and costs Rs 1.45 trillion—close to 1.4% of the national income. PDS has often been criticized for its structure, incessant corruption and leakages, and inclusion and exclusion errors in identifying the beneficiaries. The rolling out of the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013, and the overhauling of PDS in some

states has created an aspiration that the system can be made effectual in making the households not only food secure, but also nutrition secure.

Till 1992, PDS was a general entitlement scheme for all consumers without any specific target. But in 1992, PDS became **RPDS (Revamped PDS)** focusing the poor families, especially in the far-flung, hilly, remote and inaccessible areas. In 1997 RPDS became **TPDS (Targeted PDS)** which established Fair **Price Shops** for the distribution of food grains at subsidized rates. Whether a revamped PDS, undoubtedly backed by strong political will and good governance, would pay off across the country is yet to be seen. Since each state has invested heavily in PDS and revamping is already under way, it would be cost-effective to make it as a platform to achieve some of the proposed goals under National Nutrition Mission (NNM). The respective states can provide necessary nutrients such as pulses and millets to women along with grains and possibly promote dietary diversification as per the culture, tastes and preferences of people. The ministry of women and child development has advocated bringing convergence with other ministries for the success of this mission. Clearly, TPDS can play a pivotal role in bringing convergence and ensuring food and nutrition security to all in a short time.

Food security

Food security is a condition related to the supply of food, and individuals' access to it. The final report of the 1996 World Food Summit states that food security "exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life". Food Security is the ability to assure, on a long term basis, that the system provides the total population access to a timely, reliable and nutritionally adequate supply of food.

Food security can be visualized in four stages:

1. **Availability:** Food availability relates to the **supply of food** to production, distribution, and exchange. A variety of factors determine Food production such as land ownership and use; soil management; crop selection, breeding, and management; livestock breeding and management; and harvesting. Crop production is not required for a country to achieve food security.
2. **Access:** Food access refers to the **affordability and allocation of food**, as well as the preferences of individuals and households. Poverty can limit access to food, and can also increase how vulnerable an individual or household is to food price spikes. Access depends on whether the household has enough income to purchase food at prevailing prices or has sufficient land and other resources to grow its own food. Households with enough resources can overcome unstable harvests and local food shortages and maintain their access to food.
3. **Utilization:** Once the food is obtained by a household, a variety of factors affects the quantity and quality of food that reaches members of the household. In order to achieve food security, the **food ingested must be safe** and must be enough to meet the physiological requirements of every individual. Food safety affects food utilization and can be affected by the preparation, processing, and cooking of food in the community and household. Nutritional values of the household determine food choice, and whether the food meets cultural preferences is important to utilization in terms of psychological and social well-being.
4. **Stability:** Food stability refers to the **ability to obtain food over time**. Food insecurity can be transitory, seasonal, or chronic. In transitory food insecurity, food may be unavailable during certain periods of time such as during natural disasters, civil conflicts

and droughts. Seasonal food insecurity can result from the regular pattern of growing seasons in food production.

Chronic (or permanent) food insecurity is defined as the long-term, persistent lack of adequate food. Chronic and transitory food insecurity are linked since the re-occurrence of transitory food security can make households more vulnerable to chronic food insecurity.

Determinants of Food Security:

1. **Availability of Food (Physical Access):** Food availability is determined by domestic production, import capacity, food stocks and food aid. Fluctuations in per capita net availability are mainly due to changes in production on account of variations in weather conditions, increasing population, change in stocks etc. Government of India implements various programmes/schemes e.g. Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, National Food Security Mission etc. with the objective of increasing productivity. In addition, Indian Council of Agricultural Universities has developed a number of improved varieties/ hybrids of food grains crops to enhance production and productivity. Government also imports agricultural commodities to augment their domestic availability.

India's Per Capital Availability of Food grains (2009-2013)

Year	Food grains (gms per day)
2009	444.0
2010	437.1
2011	453.6
2012	450.3
2013	510.8

(Source: PIB, Government of India)

2. **Economic Accessibility:** In the post reform period, more than 300 million people continue to live in poverty and food accounts for more than 50 per cent of monthly per capita expenditure in India. To tackle with food security problem, India operates one of the largest food safety nets in the world- the National Food Security Act 2013. Government of India is implementing this scheme which provides nearly 800 million people (67 per cent of the country's population and 10 per cent of the world's) with subsidized monthly household's rations. India's PDS (Public Distribution System) is the largest distribution network of its kind in the world. In addition, the Antyodaya Anna Yojana was launched in 2000 for the poorest of BPL families. Other measures taken by the Government include providing incentives through higher Minimum Support Prices of agricultural commodities, developing rural infrastructure through MGNREGA, increase in credit flow to agriculture sector, interest subvention on crop loans etc.
3. **Nutritional Outcomes:** An interrelated aspect which needs immediate address is nutritional security. The Tenth Five Year Plan focused on comprehensive interventions aimed at improving nutrition security. Population needs adequate quantities of balanced diet to remain healthy. This can be supported by encouraging intake of pulses and eggs which remain important protein sources in the Indian diet. Nutrition Security has evolved over time from Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Planning approach in the 1970s and UNICEF conceptual framework. Body size and physical activity levels are two major determinants of human nutrient requirements. The 1996 World Food Summit provided a comprehensive definition of food security bringing into focus the linkage between food, nutrition and health. Nutrition includes assessment of under five underweight and low

BMI in adults. The National Nutrition Monitoring Board and National Family Health Survey provide data on nutritional status using Gomez classification and Bio-Mass Index (BMI).

Role of PDS in Ensuring Food security:

India has now reached a stage where the country is no longer exposed to real famines. All the same there still exist pockets within the country where people have to face acute starvation year after year. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had foreseen such a situation and declared, "It is only when we attain self-sufficiency in food that we can progress and develop ourselves. Otherwise there is the constant pressure of circumstances, there is trouble and misery and sometimes shame and humiliation." The Green Revolution made a significant change in the scene. India achieved self-sufficiency in food grains by the year 1976 through the implementation of the seed- water-fertilizer policy adopted by the Government of India.

Food grain production increased manifold during 1950-51 and 2017-2018 from 51 million tonnes to 284 million tonnes. Total lack of purchasing power however continues to haunt people in some parts of the country. They starve even when the country's granaries are overflowing. Role of Government in ensuring food security is very essential. The role of the government in providing food security involves:

- (i) Promoting domestic production to meet the demands of the growing population.
- (ii) Providing minimum support prices for procurement and storage of food grains.
- (iii) Operating a Public Distribution System
- (iv) Maintaining buffer stocks to counteract any pushing up of prices of food grains during periods of shortages.

The enactment of National Food Security Act (NFSA) in August, 2013 in India has renewed the deliberations on food security and consequently, functioning of Public Distribution System (PDS) became one of the intensely debated issues in the country. PDS is one of the most important public intervention programs to enhance food security in India and therefore, the success of NFSA will critically depend upon efficient functioning of PDS. PDS provides rationed amount of basic food items and other non-food items at subsidized prices to consumers through a network of "fair price shops". The coverage and functioning of PDS underwent several changes overtime but it essentially remained an instrument to augment food security. The access to PDS was universal till 1992 (at least in theory). Rampant corruption and high operational costs led to repackaging the program as Revamped Public Distribution System (RPDS) with focus in tribal, arid, hill and remote areas in 1992 and then to a Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) in 1997. The aim of the TPDS was to target the poorest households by differentiating the access quantities and prices at which one is allowed to buy. The differentiation was achieved by classifying the beneficiaries into Above Poverty Line (APL), Below Poverty Line (BPL) or Antyodaya households based their economic status, assessed based on the state-specific poverty lines. Antyodaya cards, which enjoy a larger subsidy than BPL households, are meant for the poorest of the poor.

In spite of the extensive coverage of PDS and its important role in ensuring food security, its relevance and effectiveness in reducing poverty and improving food security has been questioned frequently in policy discourse on food transfers in India. A number of studies related to PDS have pointed out anomalies such as inclusion and exclusion errors (Swaminathan and Misra, 2001; Hirway, 2003; Khera, 2008; Mahamalik and Sahu,

2011), large scale leakages (Jha and Ramaswami, 2010; Himanshu and Sen, 2011; Khera, 2011; Kumar *et al*, 2012; among others) and so on. On the other hand, the role played by PDS in poverty alleviation and improving food security were highlighted in a few other studies (e.g. Radhakrishna *et al*, 1997; Dreze and Khera, 2013; Tritah, 2003, Himanshu and Sen, 2013).

The precise impact of PDS on poverty and food security is an important but a complex question. The question is difficult to be answered as the impact of PDS is pervasive in the Indian economy and have implications for the livelihood at all levels. The fiscal transfer method assesses the direct benefit impact of PDS as a distributive mechanism on poverty and food security. The subsidy transfer or income gain due to PDS is defined as the additional expenditure that the household would have incurred in the absence of PDS. It is estimated by multiplying the quantity of purchases from PDS with the difference between open market price and PDS price. Similarly, the impact of PDS on calorie intake was estimated by assuming that without access to PDS, the household's budget allocation would have been the same. The quantity has been recalculated that the household would have bought in the absence of PDS. The adjusted quantity was then used to re-estimate the calorie consumption of the same household. This provides the average calorie consumption of the households without access to PDS.

The Challenge of Food Security in India

There is a perception that China has, by and large, solved its 'food problem', whereas India has not. The crux of India's food problem today pertains not so much on increasing food availability or production but with the distribution of food. This is not to suggest that the challenges associated with ensuring food availability in sustainable ways is not a policy concern, but rather, in terms of the immediacy of challenges, ensuring food access would appear to score over concerns over food availability. Despite declining growth rates in the agricultural sector relative to targets, India has seen impressive growth in foodgrain production in recent years. The National Food Security Mission has played a key role in augmenting production in cereals and pulses. Much of this has come from yield increases in the eastern regions in the country where the Green Revolution did not take place. At the same time, there has also been a strong and continuing trend for diversification into non-cereal and high-value commodities such as dairy, fruits and vegetables, which implies the possibility of higher quality diets.

Investments in the agricultural sector have been especially strong after 2004-05, both public and private, with private gross capital formation accounting for an increasing share of all investment. Despite the large increase in production, access to food continues to be a serious issue especially in the context of extraordinarily high-inflation rates in food commodities in recent years and limited access in large parts of the country to high-quality diets. The imperative that the challenge of food security derives also from recent evidence from India and elsewhere suggests that income growth might not always translate fully or quickly enough to improvements in the health nutritional status of children, implying that this issue needs attention (Haddad *et al*. 2002; Block *et al*. 2012; Coffey *et al*. 2014).

The weak link between income growth and nutritional outcomes implied that food security in the sense defined earlier would require special attention of policy-makers and cannot be presumed to follow as a consequence of growth. This is quite apart from a parallel discourse that argues for a rights-based approach to food security so that primary responsibility rests with the state. In general, there is broad agreement on the imperative

of food security in India, but deep disagreements on how to achieve this. Access of the poor to food is a priority objective for two reasons: Firstly, though the growth of food grain production in 1989-99 was lower than the increase in population during the same decade, procurement of grains was indeed going up, which is suggestive of a decline in people's consumption or in the purchasing power of the poor.

This may have happened because of structural imbalances in the economy, rising capital intensity, lack of land reforms, failure of poverty alleviation programmes, growing disparity between towns and villages, and the like. This may be added production problems in less endowed regions, which have led to a dangerous situation of huge pile-up inside Food Corporation of India's (FCI) godowns and widespread incidence of hunger outside. It is just as important to correct these policy imbalances as to increase food production. Secondly, if consumption of the poor does not increase there would be serious demand constraints on agriculture and could make the growth target of 4.5% per annum unachievable.

It is now well recognized that the availability of food grains is not a sufficient condition to ensure food security to the poor. It is also necessary that the poor have sufficient means to purchase food. The capacity of the poor to purchase food can be ensured in two ways – by raising the incomes or supplying food grains at subsidized prices. While employment generation programmes attempt the first solution, the PDS is the mechanism for the second option. With a network of more than 4.62 lakh fair price shops (FPS) distributing commodities worth more than Rs 30,000 crore annually to about 160 million families, the PDS in India is perhaps the largest distribution network of its kind in the world. This huge network can play a more meaningful role only if it ensures the availability of food to the poor households.

Mechanisms to Revamp PDS

The PDS had been initiated by the government as a system for distribution of food grains at affordable prices and management of scarcity. Over the years, PDS has become a central tool of the Government for managing the food economy of the country. PDS is currently operated as the joint responsibility of the State and the Central Governments. Through the Food Corporation of India, the Central Government has taken over the responsibility of procuring, storing, transporting and allocating the food grains to the State Governments. The State Governments are responsible for the operation of the system and it includes the identification of families below the poverty line, allocation of ration within the state, the issuing of ration cards and supervising the functions of FPS. At present, commodities namely rice, wheat, kerosene and sugar are being allocated to the states for being distributed under PDS. This paper analyses the current PDS of the nation, throwing light on its shortcoming, thereby suggesting a model for overcoming these shortcomings with special focus on need of information technology in the system.

Among the states, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana and Gujarat have intensified reforms in PDS using latest technology and ensuring community participation—they have taken steps such as computerization of off take of grains, recording of procurement, storage and distribution, installation of electronic point of sale machines in fair price shops, and regular monitoring at every stage. The digitization of beneficiaries' database and verification of their identities through Aadhaar have resulted in scraping of over 23 million fake ration cards and savings of Rs 14,000 crore of annual food subsidy. Amid serious discussions on replacing the in-kind

transfers with cash transfers, with pilots carried out in Chandigarh, Pondicherry, and Dadra and Nagar Haveli, it appears difficult to let go of PDS, at least in the short run. The political sensitivities, complexity in dismantling the massive system built over time, and inadequate infrastructure to transfer money to beneficiaries may act as barriers.

The need of the hour is PDS reforms to ensure that public distribution functions the way it is intended. Technology based reforms are suggested. Technology Based reforms and needed computerization would bring in transparency in the whole process. It would help to prevent leakages and diversion of food grains to a great extent. Major reforms to improve identification of beneficiaries are as follows:

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1. Technology-based reforms of TPDS implemented by states The Supreme Court appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Justice Wadhwa to look into reforms to the PDS to ensure food security that have been implemented by various states. In its 2009 report, the Wadhwa Committee found that certain states had implemented computerization and other technology-based reforms to revive PDS. Technology-based reforms helped plug leakages of food grains in present PDS. The Committee found that the current manual recording of eligibility of beneficiaries and transactions was prone to human errors and tampering. Furthermore, there was pilferage through the distribution network and no central monitoring system to ensure end-to-end delivery. The Committee observed that end-to-end computerization could curb large-scale diversion and help track the delivery of food grains from state depots to beneficiaries.

- **Digitized ration cards:** This allows online entry and verification of beneficiary data. It also enables online tracking of monthly entitlements and off-take of foodgrains by beneficiaries.
- **Computerized Fair Price Shops:** FPS automated by installing 'Point of Sale' device to swap the ration card. It authenticates the beneficiaries and records the quantity of subsidized grains given to a family.
- **Direct Benefit Transfer:** Under the Direct Benefit Transfer scheme, cash is transferred to the beneficiaries' account in lieu of foodgrains subsidy component. They will be free to buy food grains from anywhere in the market. For taking up this model, pre-requisites for the States/UTs would be to complete digitization of beneficiary data and seed Aadhaar and bank account details of beneficiaries. It is estimated that cash transfers alone could save the exchequer Rs.30,000crore every year.
- **Use of Global Positioning System (GPS):** Use of Global Positioning System (GPS) technology to track the movement of trucks carrying foodgrains from state depots to FPS which can help to prevent diversion.
- **SMS-based monitoring:** Allows monitoring by citizens so they can register their mobile numbers and send/receive SMS alerts during dispatch and arrival of TPDS commodities
- **Use of web-based citizen's portal:** Public Grievance Redressal Machineries, such as a toll-free number for call centers to register complaints or suggestions.

2. Inclusion of other food Items: Items other than rice and wheat need to be excluded from the purview of PDS. Attempts to include more commodities under food subsidy cover should be resisted. Sugar supply through PDS draws well-to-do families to the

system. Coarse grains are basic commodities purchased by the poor. These grains in many cases are available to the poor at low prices. There seems no additional need to supply them through PDS and bring them under the cover of food subsidy.

3. Food procurement: While provision of food subsidy is an important element of the food security system in India, an equally important role is played by food procurement and buffer stock operations. The agricultural production is subject to climatic swings and market forces and there is likely to be wide fluctuations in food grain prices. To bring about price stability, it is necessary to build and maintain an adequate level of buffer stock. For now, the challenge however is to reduce the present stock level to roughly half without detriment to farmers. This would need several legal and policy changes, which could enhance the role of private sector and make markets less distorted.

4. Role of Aadhaar: One of the key problems in the implementation of PDS is the inclusion and exclusion errors in the identification of beneficiaries. Aadhaar number can be used to accurately identify and authenticate beneficiaries entitled to receive subsidies under PDS and other government schemes. According to a study by the Unique Identification Authority of India, using Aadhaar with PDS would help eliminate duplicate and fake beneficiaries, and make identification of beneficiaries more accurate. But identification of beneficiaries through Aadhaar led to exclusion of a large chunk which led to severe criticism of the implementation of the Aadhaar based PDS. It should be noted that adoption of technology in PDS should be smooth and at any cost nobody should be denied of his/her right to food.

Conclusion

A civilized society cannot in the 21st century allow any of its citizens to die of starvation or go hungry for prolonged periods. The country is today concerned that in spite of the fact that the FCI godowns are overflowing with grain adequate food is not being consumed by the vulnerable sections of society. There are two aspects to this problem. One is the issue of having enough purchasing power or income to buy food and the other is the access to food (physical availability of food). Though the overall generation of jobs is closely connected to efficient economic growth, there are some special aspects that must be kept in mind. Thus in remote, inaccessible and backward regions both job opportunities and access to food may be constrained. In such situations, food-for-work and related schemes are necessary. Natural disasters such as earthquakes also create conditions in which emergency assistance must be provided by the government and the administration has to be alert to such spurts in hunger. Finally a minimal amount of social security must be provided to those who are old, sick or disabled and cannot partake of work even if it is available.

Although detractors perceive this to be an expensive and largely wasteful exercise that hinges on a faulty mechanism for procurement and distribution via fair price shops under the PDS, supporters suggest that this is the best way to ensure food access in many contexts in rural India. The immediate challenges for India lie in revisiting operational aspects of food procurement and distribution for a more cost-effective and nimble system. It seems unnecessary for India to seek special protection for its food policies, nor to hold on to its record of restrictive trade policy. These steps need to be in coordinated with continuing efforts at augmenting food production and diversification in sustainable ways.

The very challenges India faces also provide important opportunities to reconfigure its food security policies in meaningful ways. The government has achieved significant milestones in the PDS reforms. Almost all states have undertaken PDS reforms. Over 42 %

cards are linked with Point of sale devices which have been installed in over 77000 ration shops. 100% digitization of cards is not too far. Even Government of Delhi is trying to implement "Doorstep Delivery of Ration" scheme. In the nutshell, the much-needed PDS reforms are moving in the right direction and one can hope that the inefficiency in the system would be removed to ensure the food security millions of people in our country. The much-needed reforms in PDS are moving in the right direction and one can hope that the inefficiency in the system would be removed sooner to ensure the food security of millions of people in our country. In addition to this, the states have to come forward and play a greater role in the implementation of the PDS to make it successful.

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