



Speech of

## **Kamlung Mosang**

Minister, Food & Civil Supplies, Arunachal Pradesh

During the Conference of Food Ministers/Secretaries  
of States & UTs on NFSA-2013, at NASC Complex,  
ICAR, Pusa, New Delhi

Respected Union Minister of State for Food & Public Distribution Prof. KV Thomas, all the Hon'ble Food Ministers and their teams coming from various States and Union Territories of this great nation, Secretary, Food & Public distribution Govt of India and his team of officers and other ladies & gentlemen present.

It is a proud moment for the nation that the Union Government has finally enacted the National Food Security Act, thereby paving the way for a hunger free India. Arunachal Pradesh was perhaps among the first of the states to launch the NFSO 2013. It was formally launched on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2013. However, with the enactment NFSO 2013 the provisions of the scheme are being aligned with the Act.

The criteria for inclusion and exclusion of beneficiaries have been evolved under NFSO 2013. Under inclusion criteria the household covered under AAY and BPL schemes will be covered in the new scheme as well unless such families have surpassed the BPL criteria.

The State Govt. has notified a schedule, giving time line for completion of the identification process. At every circle/block level, committees have been constituted which also includes PRI members and Municipal ward councillors to ensure free and fair identification of beneficiaries. The process is likely to be completed by first week of October 2013.

As per provisions of the NFSO 2013, the State Govt. will issue 5 Kgs of rice per person per month. The eldest women in the family will be issued ration card in her name.

It is already a practice in Arunachal Pradesh to deliver food grains at the door step of every Fair Price Shop by the transporters appointed by the State Govt. This practice will continue in the NFSO-2013.

In order to ensure that the delivery to consumer is done smoothly, the State Govt is overhauling the Grievance Redressal Mechanism. Every district will have a Grievance Redressal Officer to hear the grievances of the consumers and the State Govt. is also considering the establishment of State Food Commission as provided under the

Act. The Vigilance Committees are functioning effectively in Arunachal Pradesh. We have Vigilance Committees at State level, at District level, at Block/Circle level and FPS level also. Because of the effective functioning of the Vigilance Committees, the TPDS is running successfully in our State. In order to make the functioning of the Vigilance Committees more effective, it is proposed to give incentives to the non official members, mostly PRI members and Municipal Ward Councillors. The Govt. of India should provide financial assistance for the Vigilance Committee meetings. The toll free No. 1967 has been activated since 12<sup>th</sup> April 2013.

Computerization of TPDS is in full progress to ensure transparent recording of transactions at all levels. Accordingly, the roll out of Arun-ePDS State Project has been formally launched by Hon'ble Chief Minister, Arunachal Pradesh Shri Nabam Tuki on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2013 from Arun-ePDS Centre at Naharlagun in the state capital complex. The Arun ePDS Centers viz. Naharlagun, Itanagar, Banderdewa & Khonsa etc. are running successfully. In total 18 locations in 9 districts across the state are being made operational at present. The project is being implemented solely with state funding which is a 1(one) time allocation. **After formal launch of NFSO-2013 by the Hon'ble Chief Minister on the 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2013, Arun-ePDS Process and Software is being enhanced to support the provisions of NFSA 2013.** The project which was solely funded by the state and in spite of its small success is presently facing grim financial difficulties. In order to keep the momentum of the project towards completion the End to End computerization of TPDS in the whole state, adequate funding from the centre is urgently needed now as per the state's requirement which has already been communicated to GoI. It is important to consider that there is a lack of core Infrastructure like Connectivity and power etc. in the state not to mention the geo-topography of the state which compounds the problem.

The Govt. of India, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Dept. of Food & PD has intimated to the State Govt. that a sum of ₹.13.17 Crores (which also includes the state share of 10%) only is admissible for completion of end to end computerisation of TPDS in the Arunachal

Pradesh. With this amount, it is not possible to complete the end to end computerisation in Arunachal Pradesh where we have numerous and unique problems. In this connection, the State Govt. has projected its barest minimum initial requirement of ₹. 59.67 Crores to the GoI, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & PD, for implementation of Component - 1 of this crucial mission mode programme. This requirement, however, does not include provision for cost escalation, network connectivity and infrastructure without which implementation of End to End Computerisation might not be possible in Arunachal Pradesh. The parameters of the GoI as per the Common template of financial proposal to avail Central funding does not address the core problems of the State. The emphasis is that Arunachal has a unique set of hurdles and can NOT be treated at PAR with Infrastructure rich states.

The State Govt. has created scientific storage capacity at various levels. At present, the State Govt. has the storage capacity of 4900 MT at various locations. However, some of godowns are not in good condition/ worthy for storage of food grains and requires renovation. A number of godowns are under construction, once the constructions are completed, the State Govt. will have a total of 15580 MT capacity godowns across the State.

In the present system, the food grains are procured at issue prices and then they are sold to the beneficiaries after adding the Wholesalers' and Retailers' margins. The intra-state transportation charges and expenditure on handling & dealer margins should be paid by Govt. of India directly to the State Govt. as the present system of reimbursement of transportation charges including HTS through FCI is not being effectively implemented. In the changed scenario of NFS Act being implemented, it is high time that the procedures of funding/payment of intra-state transportation charges, etc. are modified accordingly for effective implementation of TPDS in the State.

I also would like to reiterate our earlier statement on entitlement of per person under NFSA 2013. The per person entitlement of 5 kgs in the NFSA appears to be inadequate for a person in a month. This

issue was raised by the State Govt. in the beginning itself. In a place like Arunachal Pradesh where there is no production of food grains and no open market facility is available to procure the requirements, the 5 kgs per person per month provision will create food shortage as people depend only on PDS food grains. If the per person requirement is restricted to 5 kgs only per month, the consumers will face untold miseries. Govt. of India should, therefore, enhance the entitlement from 5 kgs to 8 kgs per month.

As per the NFSA, the expenditure to run the State Food Commission should be borne by the State Govt. The issue is of serious concern for the State Govt. In view of the poor financial condition of the State, the Govt. of India should bear all the expenditures required to run the Commission in the State.

The state Govt is not in a position to meet the financial requirement for Food Security Allowance to be paid to beneficiaries. In view of resources constraints of the state, it is our humble submission that necessary funds for Food Security Allowance should be parked with the state government in advance so that the allowance could be paid to beneficiaries as and when required.

Last but not the least; I extend my hearty congratulations to Prof. KV Thomasji and his team of officers who had done a yeoman job in bringing out the National Food Security Act for the poor and needy people of India.

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