



ADDRESS BY

SHRI CLEMENT R. MARAK
MINISTER OF FOOD,
CIVIL SUPPLIES & CONSUMER AFFAIRS,
GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA

AT
THE
FOOD MINISTERS
& SECRETARIES CONFERENCE

HELD AT
NEW DELHI

ON
THE 1ST OCTOBER 2013.

SPEECH OF SHRI CLEMENT R. MARAK, MINISTER OF
FOOD, CIVIL SUPPLIES & CONSUMER AFFAIRS,
GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA.

Hon'ble Union Minister for Consumer Affairs,
Food & Public Distribution, Prof. K.V.Thomas, my
esteemed colleagues from other States, Secretary
Ministry of Food & Public Distribution & Consumer
Affairs, Officials from State Governments and
friends.

At the outset, I would like to thank the Hon'ble
Union Minister for convening this meeting to
discuss issues relating to implementation of the
National Food Security Act, 2013.

The State Government has done some ground
work for inclusion/exclusion of beneficiaries to be

covered under the National Food Security Act in the State. Our basis for identification of the beneficiaries to be covered under the National Food Security Act will be the Draft List of the Socio-Economic & Caste Census that has been prepared by the Community & Rural Development Department as a result of the survey conducted during 2011. As mandated, 76.79% of the population in the rural areas in the State and 50.46% of the population in the urban areas of the State will be brought under the coverage of the Food Security Act. All Deputy Commissioners and Sub divisional Officers in the State are being instructed accordingly to take necessary action.

Once the beneficiaries have been identified, Ration Cards will be issued to all beneficiary

families. The Department has initiated preparations to implement issue of fresh Ration Cards for all identified families, with the woman member as Head of family in keeping with provisions of Section 13 of the Act.

The allocation of foodgrains will be done per unit/per beneficiary, in keeping with the provisions of the National Food Security Act, as compared to the earlier allocation of per family.

Delivery of foodgrains to the beneficiaries will be done through the existing 4319 Fair Price Shops in the State. A review will be made of the coverage by existing Fair Price Shops and if it is required additional FPS will be set up to cover all beneficiaries under the scheme.

The existing grievance redressal mechanism at the State level, District level and Village level will be strengthened to increase efficiency of addressing complaints and problems. A Toll free number has been made available for receiving complaints and grievances in collaboration with the Meghalaya Integrated Information System and for sending the required information to concerned office for addressing these issues expeditiously.

We are also taking keen interest in computerization of PDS in the State so as to improve the efficiency of the delivery system. We have received Rs.5.4 Crores as the first installment of funds for the implementation of the scheme. Much of the work relating to Phase I of computerization has been done and the digitization

of Ration Cards is being taken up by the Department. We are also taking steps for recruitment of technical manpower for the Project Management Unit (PMU) and procurement of Hardware that is required for the Supply Chain Management System.

A high priority is being given by the State Government for creation of sufficient Scientific Storage Capacity at various levels in close cooperation with Food Corporation of India (FCI). At present the State has intermediate storage capacity of around 30950 MT, which is far below the required capacity. Additional storage facilities are being created at various important locations, including Shillong, Nongstoin, Byrnihat, Khanapara, Tura and Baghmara.

There is a wide existing network of 4319 Fair Price Shops(FPS) covering the State under PDS, however we will review the position in view of the Food Security Act and if required additional FPS will be set up to improve coverage of all beneficiaries.

We have a tradition of involving the traditional Village Level Authorities in the Public Distribution system, particularly in the selection of Fair Price Shop Dealers and monitoring of the functioning of FPS dealers and vigilance matters. This will continue and steps will be taken to make them more effective and involve them in keeping with the provisions of Sections 25 and 26 of the Act.

At present we are covering 70,200 families or around 3.5 lakh people under AAY. We have also

estimated that for the distribution of sugar and kerosene under PDS, around 5.9 lakh Households will be covered.

The transportation, storage, handling and distribution of foodgrains and other essential commodities involves expenditure which is not included in the stipulated issue price of the items. These costs are either borne by the State Government or passed on to the consumer, therefore if the foodgrains are to reach the beneficiary at the stipulated price, my State will be in need of assistance from the Centre to meet these additional costs.

With these few words I would like to once again thank the Union Minister for giving me the opportunity to participate in the discussions.

THANK YOU.
