

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1515
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29TH JULY, 2022

CORRELATION OF NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY ACT AND POVERTY

1515 DR. SASMIT PATRA:

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

- (a) whether food security provided through National Food Security Act (NFSA) is a scheme which correlates to poverty in the country or it is a programme to provide social security to majority of the population of the country;
- (b) whether NFSA has only poor people under its coverage or it is a programme which also includes the Above Poverty Line (APL) people for food security as a national mandate; and
- (c) the reasons why NFSA is thought to be a poverty alleviation programme when it is more of a social security programme?

A N S W E R
MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SADHVI NIRANJAN JYOTI)

(a) to (c): The National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) provides for coverage of upto 75% of the rural and upto 50% of the urban population for receiving highly subsidized foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), which at Census 2011 comes to about 81.35 crore. The Coverage under the Act has been delinked from the poverty estimates and is substantially high to ensure that all the vulnerable and needy sections of the society get its benefit.

Identification of beneficiaries under the Act is under two categories- households covered under Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) which constitute poorest of the poor, to the extent specified by the Central Government and the remaining households as priority households (PHH) to be identified by the State Governments/ UT Administrations as per criteria evolved by them, within the coverage determined for the State/UT. Thus, the criteria for identification of priority households may vary from State to State depending upon their local requirement. There is no Above Poverty Line (APL) category under the Act.

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Under the Act, while Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households that constitute the poorest of the poor are legally entitled to receive 35 kg of foodgrains per family per month, priority households are entitled to 5 kg per person per month.

One of the guiding principles of the Act is its life cycle approach wherein special provisions have been made for pregnant women and lactating mothers and children in the age group of 6 months to 14 years, by entitling them to receive nutritious meal free of cost through a widespread network of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) centres, called Anganwadi Centres under ICDS scheme and also through schools under Mid-Day Meal (MDM) scheme. Higher nutritional norms have been prescribed for malnourished children upto 6 years of age. Pregnant women and lactating mothers are further entitled to receive cash maternity benefit under Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) to partly compensate for the wage loss during the period of pregnancy and also to supplement nutrition as per approved norms.
