

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1645
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10TH DECEMBER, 2024

FOOD SECURITY IN THE COUNTRY

1645 **SMT. RANJEET RANJAN:**
SHRI HARIS BEERAN:
SHRI NEERAJ DANGI:

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

- (a) total number of individuals experiencing food insecurity in the country, State-wise;
- (b) whether Government is failing to ensure equitable distribution of food grains, particularly in remote and underserved regions;
- (c) the steps Government is taking to improve the quality and nutritional value of food grains provided through the Public Distribution System (PDS); and
- (d) the manner in which Government monitors the effectiveness of food security programs across the country?

A N S W E R
MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS,
FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRIMATI NIMUBEN JAYANTIBHAI BAMBHANIYA)

(a) & (b): The National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) provides for coverage of up to 75% of the rural population and up to 50% of the urban population for receiving highly subsidized foodgrains under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), thus covering about two-thirds of the total population. Coverage under the Act is substantially high to ensure that all the vulnerable and needy sections of the society get its benefit. The Act is being successfully implemented in all the States/UTs and free-of-cost foodgrains are being distributed to about 80.67 crore beneficiaries as per their entitlement under the Act. There is no report from any State/UT regarding food insecurity.

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(c): In order to achieve a uniform nutritional impact of fortified rice among the targeted population, the Government of India is supplying fortified rice through out the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) Scheme, and Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme and in other Welfare Schemes (OWS) in all States and Union Territories (UTs). Custom-milled rice has been replaced with fortified rice in every scheme of the Government and 100% coverage of distribution of fortified rice has been achieved by March, 2024. Millets, which are commonly known as Nutri-Cereals, are already a part of Public Distribution System (PDS).

(d): The NFSA provides for periodic social audits on the functioning of fair price shops, Targeted Public Distribution Systems and other welfare schemes, through local authority, or any other authority or body, as may be authorized by the State Government. The Central Government may also conduct or cause to be conducted social audits through independent agencies having experience in the conduct of such audits.

The Government has engaged Monitoring Institutions (MIs) of repute to undertake the concurrent evaluation of the implementation of the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) in all States/UTs for 03 years (2020-23). The questionnaires devised for the evaluation exercise also covered a few questions on the receipt of free food grains under PMGKAY. Reports submitted by the MIs of the surveyed households indicate that rations under NFSA have been provided free of cost since January 2023 to eligible beneficiaries during the period of the survey
