

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3410
TO BE ANSWERED ON 1ST APRIL, 2025

EXPANSION OF NFSA COVERAGE BASED ON POPULATION GROWTH

3410 **SHRI MANOJ KUMAR JHA:**

Will the Minister of *Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution* be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the coverage of beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) is still based on the 2011 Census;
- (b) whether Government has assessed the number of additional beneficiaries who would be eligible if the coverage was updated to reflect the projected population of 2025;
- (c) whether Government has taken any measures in light of the Supreme Court's 2022 observation that benefits under NFSA should not be restricted to the 2011 Census figures; and
- (d) the steps taken by Government to ensure food security for those currently excluded due to outdated population estimates?

A N S W E R

MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS,
FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(**SHRIMATI NIMUBEN JAYANTIBHAI BAMBHANIYA**)

(a) & (b): Section 9 of the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) provides that the total number of persons to be covered in rural and urban areas of the State shall be calculated on the basis of the population estimates as per the Census of which the relevant figures have been published. At the time of implementation of NFSA, the latest published figures of Census pertaining to the year 2011 was used to determine the coverage of all States/Union Territories (UTs).

Any revision in coverage shall be possible only after the relevant data of next population Census is published.

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(c) & (d): The Act provides for coverage of upto 75% of the rural and upto 50% of the urban population, which at Census 2011 comes to 81.35 crore persons. The Coverage under the Act is substantially high to ensure that all the vulnerable and needy sections of the society get its benefit. The States/UTs have identified only 80.56 crore person, against the intended coverage of 81.35 crore person. Still, there is a scope for identification of 0.79 crore more beneficiaries, by the States/UTs, under the NFSA.

The Central Government has issued advisories to all the States/Union Territories from time to time to identify all eligible and poor persons/ households including vulnerable Sections of the Society for inclusion under the NFSA. States undertake updation of their beneficiary database so that bogus ration cards get deleted and better targeting of rightful beneficiaries is ensured. Thus, deletion of ineligible beneficiaries and addition of eligible beneficiaries under the Act is a continuous process.

States/ Union Territories have also been advised to clean up their beneficiary database from time to time to ensure rightful targeting of beneficiaries and inclusion of deserving persons within the ceiling determined under the NFSA for availing benefits under the Act.
