

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

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO.275
TO BE ANSWERED ON 19TH AUGUST, 2025

REVISION OF NFSA BENEFICIARY COVERAGE

275 **SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN:**

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

- (a) whether the Ministry has taken any steps, following Supreme Court's directions, to revise National Food Security Act (NFSA) coverage using post-2011 population projections, given the delay in conducting the 2021 Census;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the estimated number of additional beneficiaries identified under updated projections, State-wise; and
- (c) the timeline by which the updated coverage under NFSA will be implemented to ensure food security for all eligible persons?

A N S W E R
MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND
MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY
(SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI)

(a) to (c): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) of STARRED QUESTION NO.275 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 19.08.2025 IN THE RAJYA SABHA.

(a) to (c): The National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) provides for coverage upto 75% of rural population and upto 50% of urban population for receiving free of cost foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), thus covering about 67% of the bottom population which at Census 2011 comes to 81.35 crore. Coverage under the Act is substantially high to ensure that all the vulnerable and needy sections of the society get its benefit. At present, against the intended coverage of 81.35 crore, the States/UTs have identified 80.56 crore person. Still, there is a scope of identification of 0.79 crore more beneficiaries under the NFSA.

With reference to Writ Petition (Civil) No. 6 of 2020 and No.916 of 2020, the Supreme Court was of view that the Central Government needs to take steps to undertake exercise under Section 9 of the NFSA to re-determine the number of persons to be covered under rural and urban areas of the States. However, Section 9 of the Act 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. In absence of any authentic data on population due to the delay in the release of the 2021 Census, it would not be proper to re-determine the State-wise coverage under NFSA. Any change in the State/UT-wise coverage is possible only after the population data of next Census is published.

Sub-section 2 of Section 10 of the Act provides that the State Government shall update the list of eligible households, within the number of persons determined under section 9 for the rural and urban areas, in accordance with the guidelines framed under sub-section (1). In this regard, the Central Government has issued advisories, from time to time, to all the States/Union Territories to identify all eligible and poor persons/ households including vulnerable Sections of the Society for inclusion under the Act. States undertake updation of their beneficiary database so that ineligible ration cards get deleted and better targeting of rightful beneficiaries is ensured.
