

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1003
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29TH JULY, 2025

CONCERNS RELATED TO HUNGER AND FOOD SECURITY

1003 SHRI SANJAY RAUT:

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

- (a): whether Government is aware that India ranked 105th out of 127 countries in the 2024 Global Hunger Index, indicating serious hunger concerns;
- (b): the number of new beneficiaries added under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) since 2020;
- (c): the steps taken to ensure that no poor family goes hungry due to food inflation;
- (d): whether there is any proposal to increase the quantity or improve the quality of foodgrain entitlement per head under NFSA; and
- (e): the Ministry's response to the finding that 55.6 per cent of Indians are unable to afford a healthy diet despite food subsidy programmes?

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

(a): The Global Hunger Report 2024 was released by Concern Worldwide, Welt Hunger Hilfe, and the Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict. The Global Hunger Index is a flawed measure of 'Hunger' and does not reflect India's true position. Three out of four of its constituent indicators (namely, Stunting, Wasting, and Child Mortality), which are used for calculation of the index, are related to the health of children and cannot be taken to reflect hunger in the population.

According to the Global Hunger Index 2024, India ranks 105 out of 127 countries. India ranked 111 out of 125 countries on the Global Hunger Index 2023. There has been an improvement in India's rank in 2024 compared with 2023, which is mainly attributable to an improvement in the fourth constituent indicator, namely Prevalence of Undernourishment (PoU), of the Index.

(b): The Central Government issues 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 are undertaking 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. At present, against the intended coverage of 81.35 crore, 80.56 crore beneficiaries are receiving foodgrains free of cost.

(c): The National Food Security Act, 2013, is being implemented in all the States/UTs, aims to supplement the food requirements of up to 75% of the rural and up to 50% of the urban population, which, according to the 2011 census, comes to 81.35 crore persons. While Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households, which constitute the poorest of the poor, are entitled to 35 kg of foodgrains per household per month, Priority Households (PHH) are entitled to 5 kg of foodgrains per person per month, free of cost.

The Central Government, in order to remove the financial burden of the poor beneficiaries and to ensure nationwide uniformity and effective implementation of the programme for support of the poor, had decided to provide food grains free of cost to AAY households and PHH beneficiaries, beginning from 1st January 2023 under the NFSA. The period for distribution of free of cost foodgrains has been extended for five years from 1st January, 2024, with an estimated financial outlay of Rs. 11.80 lakh crore totally to be borne by Central Government.

(d): The Department has formulated and issued a Quality control manual, to uniformly maintain the quality standards of foodgrains from procurement to its distribution to the eligible beneficiaries. Only foodgrains conforming to food safety standards are issued through the various food security programs under the NFSA.

At present, there is no proposal to increase the quantity of foodgrains entitlement under the Act under consideration by the government.

(e): The Coverage under the Act is substantially high to ensure that all the vulnerable and needy sections of the society get its benefit.
