

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 195
TO BE ANSWERED ON 22ND JULY, 2025

COVERAGE OF BENEFICIARIES UNDER PDS

195 SHRI SAKET GOKHALE:

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that about 7.9 million eligible Indian beneficiaries are currently not covered under the Public Distribution Scheme (PDS); and
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps being taken by the Ministry to bring these eligible beneficiaries under the ambit of PDS and the expected timeline for it?

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

(a) & (b): The Public Distribution Scheme (PDS) is now governed as per the provision of National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA). The Act provides for coverage of upto 75% of rural population and upto 50% of urban population thus covering about two-thirds of the total population of the country 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.

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 ineligible 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.
