

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 207
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2ND DECEMBER, 2025

EXCLUSION OF BENEFICIARIES UNDER NFSA

207 **SHRI SAKET GOKHALE:**

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

- (a) the details of latest estimate of the number of persons eligible for coverage under the National Food Security Act (NFS) who remain excluded due to reliance on the 2011 Census;
- (b) the estimated breakup of these exclusions along with details of the methodology adopted State/UT-wise; and
- (c) whether any interim expansion has been considered or used for extending NFS benefits to the excluded beneficiaries pending completion of the next Census, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

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 (NFS), 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 NFS.

Under the Act, identification of beneficiaries is under two categories- households covered under Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) identified by the State Government to the extent specified by the Central Government as per the guideline applicable for the said scheme and the remaining households as priority households to be identified by the State Governments/ Union Territories (UT) Administrations as per criteria evolved by them, within the coverage determined for the State/UT. Under the joint responsibility of the Central and State Government, the responsibility for identification of beneficiaries and issuance of their ration cards rests with the concerned State Government. Thus, the criteria for identification of beneficiaries under Priority Households Category may vary from State to State depending upon Socio-Economic, demographic conditions of the State. Thus, deletion of ineligible beneficiaries and addition of eligible beneficiaries under the Act is a continuous process.

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