

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3569
TO BE ANSWERED ON 24TH MARCH, 2026

EXTENSION OF PMGKAY

3569 **SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA:**

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

- (a): the outcome of the extension of Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) from January 2024 onwards;
- (b): the reduction in out-of-pocket expenditure on food for beneficiary households;
- (c): the improvement in food consumption diversity and caloric intake;
- (d): the stabilization of household food security during inflationary periods; and
- (e): the details of State-wise and category-wise indicators thereof?

A N S W E R

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

(a): 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, the Central Government distributed food grains free of cost to Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households and Priority Households (PHH) beneficiaries, for a period of one year, beginning from 1st January 2023 under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY).

Keeping in view welfare of the beneficiaries and in order to strengthen the food security in terms of accessibility, affordability and availability of food grains for the targeted population, and to maintain uniformity across the States, the decision was taken to continue providing food grains, free of cost, under PMGKAY for five years w.e.f 1st January 2024.

Government of India has a commitment to the people of the nation - a dignified life by ensuring them access to food and nutritional security through availability of adequate quantity of quality food grains. The scheme also provides a unified institutional mechanism with uniform price and quantity across the country and remove difficulties of the beneficiaries specially migrants under One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC).

(b) to (e): By providing uninterrupted foodgrains free of cost under PMGKAY, it reduces household expenditure on essential food items and protects poor households from rising food

prices and inflation. It has also led to significant savings for beneficiary households, as the full economic cost of foodgrains is borne by the Government.

The economic cost of 35 kg rice for an Antyodaya family comes to Rs.1461, while the cost of 35 kg wheat comes to Rs.1043, which is being borne by the Central Government under PMGKAY, and the foodgrains are provided completely free to the households. Thus, the monthly savings of ration card holders are significant, on account of the free foodgrains.

Under the PMGKAY, free of cost foodgrains are being distributed to eligible beneficiaries wherein “foodgrains” means rice, wheat or coarse grains or any combination thereof conforming to such quality norms as may be determined, by order, by the Central Government from time to time.

The provision of free foodgrains has ensured assured access to staple food, which has helped improve overall caloric intake, particularly among economically vulnerable households by reducing expenditure on cereals and enables households to allocate more resources towards other food items such as milk, eggs, and vegetables, thereby contributing to improved dietary diversity.
