

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 365
TO BE ANSWERED ON 3RD FEBRUARY, 2026

BENEFICIARIES UNDER NFSA IN MAHARASHTRA

365 # SMT. SUNETRA AJIT PAWAR:

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

- (a): the number of beneficiaries currently covered under NFSA in the State of Maharashtra and whether there is any proposal to expand the urban/rural coverage limit;
- (b): the special measures taken to ensure the timely supply of food grains in the State's tribal and drought-affected areas; and
- (c): whether any alternative arrangement has been made for eligible families who were left out due to technical issues during e-KYC and Aadhaar seeding under the 'Smart-PDS' initiative in the State?

A N S W E R

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

(a): The National Food Security Act (NFSA) 2013, provides for coverage of 76.32% of the rural and 45.34% of the urban population in the State of Maharashtra, for receiving free of cost foodgrains, which at Census 2011 comes to 700.17 lakh persons. The State Government of Maharashtra has identified beneficiaries upto the maximum permissible limit i.e. 700.17 lakh beneficiaries determined for the State under the Act.

(b): The Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) under the Act is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and State/Union Territory (UT) Governments. Central Government is responsible for procurement, allocation and transportation of foodgrains upto the designated depots of the Food Corporation of India. The operational responsibilities including lifting of foodgrains from the designated depots, further transportation & handling within the State, delivery of foodgrains upto the door step of fair price shops, identification of beneficiaries, issuance of their ration cards and distribution of foodgrains to beneficiaries as per their entitlements through fair price shops rests with the State Government.

(c): Under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State Governments, the responsibility for identification of beneficiaries, within the coverage determined for the State/UT and issuance of their ration cards rest with the concerned States/UTs.

Further, all States/UTs have been advised that no genuine beneficiary or household shall be denied from receiving entitled quota of subsidized foodgrains only for want of Aadhaar or due to failure of biometric/Aadhaar authentication due to network/connectivity/linking related issues, other technical reasons, or poor biometrics of the beneficiary. It is also advised that Aadhaar authentication of beneficiaries either biometrically or through Aadhaar-OTP (SMS on beneficiary mobile) through ePoS device should be the most preferred mode of authentication. Alternatively, PDS-OTP (SMS on beneficiary mobile), if available, may also be used to authenticate the transaction. If any States/UT devise any other methodology of authentication of beneficiaries during distribution of foodgrains, then, concerned State/UT may ensure that such distribution takes place in the presence of a responsible Govt. Officer/Employee for ensuring the delivery of foodgrains to right persons/beneficiaries.
