

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1009
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28TH JULY, 2026

FREE FOODGRAIN DISTRIBUTION SCHEMES

1009 PROF. MANOJ KUMAR JHA:

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

- (a) the total number of beneficiaries currently covered under free foodgrain distribution schemes in rural areas;
- (b) whether this number has increased, decreased or remained unchanged over the last five years;
- (c) whether any State Government has requested a reduction in allocation citing improved rural household incomes; and
- (d) whether Government has assessed the continuing dependence on free foodgrain support, if so, whether it is consistent with rural wage boom?

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

(a): At present, 79.09 Crore beneficiaries (as on 08.07.2026) are currently covered under free food grain distribution scheme i.e. Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojanan (PMGKAY) in the country (including rural areas).

(b): The number of beneficiaries covered under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) for last five financial years is as follows:

Sr. No.	Financial year	Total No. of Beneficiaries under PMGKAY (in Crores)
1.	2021-22	80.59
2.	2022-23	80.28
3.	2023-24	80.66
4.	2024-25	81.05
5.	2025-26	79.62

(c) & (d): This Department has not received request from any State Government for reduction in allocation of foodgrains citing improved rural household incomes.

The National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) being successfully implemented in all the States/UTs, aims to supplement the food requirements of upto 75% of the rural and upto 50% of the urban population which at Census 2011 comes to 81.35 crore beneficiaries. As per the section 10 of the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA), it is the responsibility of the State Governments to identify AAY households in accordance with the guidelines applicable to the scheme and remaining household as priority households in accordance with the guidelines prescribed by the State Governments. Thus, it is the responsibility of the State Governments to ensure that, within the coverage determined for the State, all the eligible households, as per criteria prescribed by them, are included, and provided foodgrains as per their entitlements under the Act.

Further, the Government has initiated technology-driven reforms such as Aadhaar-based authentication, e-KYC, digitization of ration cards, and Rightful Targeting to improve the efficiency of the Public Distribution System by eliminating ineligible beneficiaries and ensure that benefits reach genuine eligible households.
