

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 215
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21ST JULY, 2026

RATIONALE FOR THE DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO NFSA

215 SHRI RAVI CHANDRA VADDIRAJU:

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

- (a): the rationale that guided the draft amendments to the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013, changing the stable Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) entitlement from a flat kg per household to a strict 7 kg per person system;
- (b): whether any State-wise data analysis has been conducted to safeguard small-unit impoverished households from suffering immediate food security drops due to this individual capping rule; and
- (c): the operational status of the newly cleared ₹25,530 crore allocation under SARTHAK PDS scheme aimed at modernizing supply transparency across rural fair-price shops over the next five years?

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

(a) & (b): The draft National Food Security (Amendment) Bill, 2026 envisages revising the foodgrains entitlement of Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households from thirty-five kilograms of foodgrains per household per month to seven kilograms of foodgrains per person per month, subject to a maximum of thirty-five kilograms of foodgrains per household per month.

The draft Bill envisages ensuring equitable distribution, promoting uniformity in entitlements, addressing variations arising from the existing household-based system, and aligning the allocation framework with the objectives of the NFSA.

The Government has undertaken an analysis of AAY households, which has revealed disparities in per-capita foodgrain availability under the current system.

(c): The scheme “Scheme for Assistance in Ration Transport and Handling-Income with Automation in PDS” (SARTHAK PDS) is an umbrella scheme integrating the following two sub schemes:

- (i) “Assistance to State Agencies for intra-State movement of foodgrains and FPS dealers’ margin under NFSA”

(ii) “Scheme for Modernization and Reforms through Technology in Public Distribution System (SMART PDS)”.

Under the sub-scheme “Assistance to State Agencies for intra-state movement of foodgrains and FPS dealers’ margin under NFSA”, central assistance is provided to States/UTs for meeting the expenditure towards intra-State movement & handling of foodgrains and margin paid to fair price shop dealers under the NFSA, in accordance with the provisions of Food Security (Assistance to State Governments) Rules, 2015 (as amended from time to time).

The sub scheme SMART PDS is the next stage of technology driven reforms in the Public Distribution System (PDS), building upon the digital backbone created during Phase 1 (2023-26). It aims to transition from basic digitization to intelligent, AI-enabled governance through the creation of a National PDS Stack, advanced grievance redressal (ASHA), beneficiary validation framework (NIRMAL), and supply chain intelligence system (SAKSHAM). The SMART-PDS scheme strengthen interoperability, real-time analytics, cloud-based infrastructure, and ISO-certified process standardization across all 36 states/UTs.
