

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2610
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11TH AUGUST, 2026

EXCLUSION OF ELIGIBLE BENEFICIARIES UNDER NFSA

2610 SHRI RAJEEV KUMAR:

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that NFSA/PDS is not updated because coverage is based on the 2011 Census, the estimated eligible population vs the covered population now and the number of people excluded from NFSA/PDS;
- (b) whether the Ministry would update the coverage despite the Census delay, if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether an interim mechanism would expand coverage to the newly eligible and by when; and
- (d) whether the Ministry will consider publishing State-wise coverage-vs-eligible data?

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

(a) to (d): Section 9 of the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) provides that the total number of persons to be covered in rural and urban areas of the State shall be calculated based on the population estimates as per the Census of which the relevant figures have been published. At the time of implementation of NFSA, the latest published figures of Census pertaining to the year 2011 were used to determine the coverage of all States/Union Territories (UTs).

The Act provides for coverage of upto 75% of the rural and upto 50% of the urban population, which at Census 2011 comes to 81.35 crore persons. The Coverage under the Act is substantially high to ensure that all the vulnerable and needy sections of society get its benefit.

As on 16.07.2026, the States/UTs have identified only 79.08 crore, against the intended coverage of 81.35 crore beneficiaries. Still, there is a scope for identification of 2.27 crore more beneficiaries by the States/UTs, under the Act.

States/ Union Territories have been advised to clean up their beneficiary database from time to time to ensure rightful targeting of beneficiaries and inclusion of deserving persons within the ceiling determined under the NFSA for availing benefits under the Act. States undertake updation of their beneficiary database so that ineligible ration cards get deleted, and better targeting of rightful beneficiaries is ensured. Thus, deletion of ineligible beneficiaries and addition of eligible beneficiaries under the Act is a continuous process.

At present, no proposal for revision of beneficiaries coverage/ ceiling under the Act is under consideration of the DFPD.
