

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

**LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO.285
TO BE ANSWERED ON 9TH AUGUST, 2023**

NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY ACT, 2013

***285. DR. AMOL RAMSING KOLHE:
SHRI KULDEEP RAI SHARMA:**

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of food stocks in the country as of July, 2023;**
- (b) the details and salient features of the National Food Security Act (NFSA);**
- (c) the details of assistance sought by the States of Maharashtra, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Tamil Nadu and funds actually provided by the Government for implementation of NFSA;**
- (d) whether full and effective implementation of the said Act is likely to help in checking price rise;**
- (e) if so, the steps being taken by the Government for effective implementation of the Act and checking the price rise and black marketing;**
- (f) whether the Government also aims to amend NFSA 2013 and renew the prices given under Schedule 1 as the subsidized prices were fixed for a period of three years from the date of commencement of the Act; and**
- (g) if so, whether the Government plans to raise the subsidised food prices mentioned in the Schedule and if so, the details of amendments proposed along with the timeline of its implementation?**

**A N S W E R
MINISTER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY, CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD &
PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND TEXTILES
(SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL)**

(a) to (g): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (g) OF THE STARRED QUESTION NO. 285 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 09.08.2023 IN THE LOK SABHA.

(a): The stock of Rice and Wheat available in Central Pool as on 01.07.2023 is 253.49 Lakh Metric Tons (LMT) and 301.45 LMT respectively.

(b): Salient features of the National Food Security Act, 2013 is attached herewith as Annexure-I.

(c): As and when proposals/claims for expenditure incurred by the State Governments/UTs towards intra-State movement, handling of foodgrains and margin paid to fair price shop dealers, are received from the States/UTs, the same are examined and admissible funds are released to States/UTs. Funds released under the Scheme of Central assistance for meeting expenditure incurred towards intra-State movement & handling of foodgrains and Fair Price Shop (FPS) dealer's margin, to Maharashtra, Andaman & Nicobar Island and Tamil Nadu, since implementation of NFSA are Rs.3094.95 crore, Rs.0.22 crore and Rs.1229.20 crore respectively.

Government of India has also released subsidy of Rs. 2725.75 crores to Maharashtra and Rs.8685.95 crore to Tamil Nadu during the year of 2022-23. Andaman & Nicobar Islands does not procure foodgrains for Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and it receives foodgrains from Food Corporation of India (FCI) under TPDS.

(d) & (e): The National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) provides for coverage of upto 75% of the rural and upto 50% of the urban population, at the all India level, for receiving highly subsidized foodgrains, which at Census 2011 comes to 81.35 crore persons. The Act is being implemented in all the States/UTs. Out of maximum coverage limit, around 80.24 crore beneficiaries have been covered under NFSA at present for receiving highly subsidized/free foodgrains. During 2023-24, around 595 LMT of foodgrains are allocated to States/UTs under NFSA/ Other Welfare Schemes (OWS). In addition to this, 1118 LMT of additional foodgrains were also allocated free of cost to States/UTs under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) for the period of 28 months i.e. from April, 2020 to December, 2022. Further, Government is providing free of cost foodgrains to NFSA beneficiaries as per their entitlement under PMGKAY w.e.f. 1st January, 2023.

Government takes various steps from time to time to augment domestic availability and to stabilize the prices of essential food commodities. These steps, inter-alia, include releases from the buffer to cool down prices, imposition of stock limits, monitoring of stocks declared by entities to prevent hoarding as also requisite changes in trade policy instruments like rationalization of import duty, changes in import quota, restrictions on exports of the commodity etc.

In order to manage the overall food security of the country and control the increasing prices of foodgrains the government amended the export policy of wheat from free to prohibited category with effect from 13th May 2022 for restricting export of Indian Durum Wheat, and from 12th July, 2022 the export of atta (wheat) is subjected to the recommendation of Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on export of wheat.

In order to manage the overall food security and to prevent hoarding and unscrupulous speculation, the Government has issued stock limits order on the Wheat applicable to Traders/Wholesaler, Retailers, Big Chain Retailers and Processors for all States and Union Territories for a period from 12th June, 2023 till 31st March 2024.

The Government has also decided to offload Wheat in phases, wherein 15 LMT of Wheat will be offloaded in the first phase from central pool stock under Open Market Sale Scheme (Domestic) (OMSS (D)) 2023 to flour mills/private traders/bulk buyers/manufacturers of wheat products through e-auction to control retail prices of wheat. OMSS operations are done after taking into account foodgrain stocks needed for buffer and requirements for NFSA and Other Welfare Schemes.

The export of broken rice has been banned and export duty of 20% imposed on non-Basmati rice except for parboiled rice with effect from 9th September, 2022. The Government is also continuously disposing rice under the OMSS to augment availability in the market and control the prices. The export of White Rice has been prohibited from 20.07.2023.

In order to ensure rightful targeting and transparent distribution of foodgrains under NFSA, more than 5 lakh e-PoS devices have been installed at the Fair Price Shops(FPS) all over the country for transactions through Aadhar authentication. Transaction details are also available in the public domain. Further, whenever e-PoS device is not available or not working at FPS, this Department has advised all States/UTs to distribute the subsidized/free foodgrains in the presence of Government official/Staff.

Whenever any complain of black marketing is received in this Department the same is sent to concerned State/UT for taking necessary inquiry in the matter and report the Action Taken Report (ATR) to this Department.

(f)&(g): As per Schedule-I of the National Food Security Act, 2013, eligible households shall be entitled to foodgrains under section 3 at the subsidized price not exceeding rupees 3 per kg for rice, rupees 2 per kg for wheat and rupee 1 per kg for coarse grains for a period of three years from the date of commencement of this Act i.e. July 5, 2013 and thereafter, at such price, as may be fixed by the Central Government, from time to time, not exceeding,— (i) the minimum support price for wheat and coarse grains; and (ii) the derived minimum support price for rice, as the case may be.

The matter was reviewed from time to time and keeping in view the interests of the vulnerable sections of the population, these prices were kept unchanged till 31st December, 2022.

The Central Government, in order to remove the financial burden of the poor beneficiaries and to ensure nationwide uniformity and effective implementation of the Act, is providing food grains free of cost to Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households and Priority Households (PHH) beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA), for a period of one year beginning from 1st January 2023 through the PMGKAY.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (b) OF THE STARRED QUESTION NO.285 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 09.08.2023 IN THE LOK SABHA.

SALIENT FEATURES OF NFSA

- (i) Coverage and entitlement under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS):** Upto 75% of the rural population and 50% of the urban population will be covered under TPDS, with uniform entitlement of 5 kg per person per month. However, since Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households constitute poorest of the poor, and are presently entitled to 35 kg per household per month, entitlement of existing AAY households will be protected at 35 kg per household per month.
- (ii) State-wise coverage:** Corresponding to the all India coverage of 75% and 50% in the rural and urban areas respectively, State-wise coverage will be determined by the Central Government. State-wise coverage has been determined by the Planning Commission (now NITI Ayog) on the basis of 2011-12 NSSO Household Consumption Expenditure Survey data.
- (iii) Subsidized prices under TPDS and their revision:** Foodgrains under the Act are being distributed to eligible beneficiaries free of cost w.e.f. 1st January, 2023.
- (iv) Tide Over allocation:** In case, any State's foodgrains allocation, based on the prescribed coverage and entitlements under the Act, is lower than their current allocation, it will be protected upto the level of average offtake during 2010-11 to 2012-13 under normal TPDS, at prices to be determined by the Central Government. Existing prices for APL households i.e. Rs. 6.10 per kg for wheat and Rs 8.30 per kg for rice has been determined as issue prices for the additional allocation to protect the average offtake.
- (v) Identification of Households:** Within the coverage under TPDS determined for each State, the work of identification of eligible households is to be done by States/UTs.

(vi) Nutritional Support to women and children: Pregnant women and lactating mothers and children in the age group of 6 months to 14 years will be entitled to meals as per prescribed nutritional norms under Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and Mid-Day Meal (MDM) schemes. Higher nutritional norms have been prescribed for malnourished children upto 6 years of age.

(vii) Maternity Benefit: Pregnant women and lactating mothers will also be entitled to receive maternity benefit of not less than Rs.6,000 as per scheme to be formulated by the Central Government.

(viii) Women Empowerment: Eldest woman of the household of age 18 years or above will be the head of the household for the purpose of issuing of ration cards.

(ix) Grievance Redressal Mechanism: Grievance redressal mechanism at the District and State levels. States will have the flexibility to use the existing machinery or set up separate mechanism.

(x) Cost of intra-State transportation & handling of foodgrains and FPS Dealers' margin: Central Government will provide assistance to States in meeting the expenditure incurred by them on transportation of foodgrains within the State, its handling and FPS dealers' margin as per norms devised for this purpose.

(xi) Transparency and Accountability: Provisions have been made for disclosure of records relating to PDS, social audits and setting up of Vigilance Committees in order to ensure transparency and accountability.

(xii) Food Security Allowance: Provision for food security allowance to entitled beneficiaries in case of non-supply of entitled foodgrains or meals.

(xiii) Penalty: Provision for penalty on public servant or authority, to be imposed by the State Food Commission, in case of failure to comply with the relief recommended by the District Grievance Redressal Officer.
