

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.991
TO BE ANSWERED ON 26TH JULY, 2023**

CENSUS USED TO DETERMINE COVERAGE OF NFSA

991. SHRI PRADYUT BORDOLOI:

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 the census population estimates that are currently being used to determine the coverage of NFSA;
- (b) the details of the last time that the coverage was adjusted upwards by the Central Government to account for the population increase since 2011;
- (c) whether the Government has finalized a timeline for the completion of the upcoming Census, if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the other remedies for the under-coverage in the PDS on account of population increase since 2021, given that according to news reports the census is unlikely to be completed by 2024;
- (e) whether the Government is cognizant that according to the population projections by the Census of India, roughly 10 crore Indians are excluded from the PDS because of the delayed census, if so, the details in this regard; and
- (f) whether the Centre has considered using projected population numbers (from the Census of India office) for 2023 because the 2021 census has not been conducted, if so, the details in this regard?

**A N S W E R
MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SADHVI NIRANJAN JYOTI)**

(a) to (f): Section 9 of the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) provides that the percentage coverage under the Targeted Public Distribution System in rural and urban areas for each State shall be determined by the Central Government and the total number of persons to be covered in the State shall be calculated on the basis of 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 was used to determine the coverage of all States/Union Territories (UTs).

The National Food Security Act, 2013 provides for coverage of upto 75% of the rural population and upto 50% of the urban population, which at Census 2011 comes to 81.35 crore persons. Intent of the Government for conducting Census 2021 was notified in Gazette of India on 28th March, 2019. Due to outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, the Census 2021 and the related field activities stand postponed.

At present, against the intended coverage of 81.35 crore, 80.11 crore beneficiaries are identified by the States/UTs under the Act. Still, there is scope for identification of 1.24 crore additional beneficiaries under the Act by the State Governments. The Coverage under the Act is sufficient high to ensure that all the vulnerable and needy sections of the society get its benefit.
