

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 63
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2nd February, 2021**

REVAMPING OF PDS TO TACKLE NUTRITIONAL DEFICITS

**63. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA VISWANATH:
SHRI KOTHA PRABHAKAR REDDY:**

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

(a) whether India fares poorly in hunger index and ranks 94 out of 107 countries in the Index as the country has the highest prevalence of undernourished children, even Bangladesh and Pakistan score better and 76% of rural Indians cannot afford nutritious diet and there is a need for a revamped PDS to tackle nutritional deficits; and

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the funds spent so far in the last five years and the corrective steps being taken in this regard?

A N S W E R

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD &
PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI DANVE RAOSAHEB DADARAO)**

(a) & (b): As per information available in the public domain (<https://www.globalhungerindex.org/download/all.html>), India ranks 94 in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2020 report brought out by Concern Worldwide and Welthungerlife. As per GHI Reports, the composite GHI scores of India have improved from 38.9 in 2000 to 27.2 in 2020. Thus, the country has shown consistent improvement over the years. The calculation of GHI is based on following indicators namely:

- (i) the percentage of population that is undernourished (1/3rd weightage);**
- (ii) percentage of children under five years old who suffer from wasting and stunting (1/3rd weightage); and**
- (iii) child mortality (1/3rd weightage).**

The value of Undernourished indicator calculated over the span of time shows that India has made significant improvement. The score of the indicator improved from 18.6 in 2000-2002 to 14.0 in 2017-2019. Bangladesh is ranked 75 and Pakistan is ranked 88.

The Government of India accords high priority to the issue of hunger and has been providing foodgrains at highly subsidized prices to the targeted population through State Governments/Union Territory Administrations under National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013 and Other Welfare Schemes (OWS). NFSA provides for coverage of upto 75% of the rural population and upto 50% of the urban population for receiving foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), thus covering about two-thirds of the population of the country for receiving foodgrains @ Rs 1/2/3 per kg for nutri-cereals/wheat/rice respectively. Identification of beneficiaries under the Act is under two categories- households covered under Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) and Priority Households (PHH), within the coverage determined for the State/UT. While Priority Households are entitled to receive 5 kg per person per month, AAY households, which constitute the poorest of the poor, continue to receive 35 Kg of foodgrains per household per month. At present, the Act is being implemented in all the States/UTs covering about 79.43 crore persons to get highly subsidized foodgrains. The coverage under the Act is substantially high to ensure that all the vulnerable and needy sections of the society get its benefit. The Act also contains provisions for nutritional support to pregnant women and lactating mothers and children upto 14 years of age.

The implementation of NFSA through the Public Distribution System (PDS) is a joint responsibility of the Central and State Governments/UT Administrations, and the State Governments/UT Administrations are responsible for the identification of beneficiaries under the NFSA.

During the year 2019-20, the Government allocated a quantity of 605.72 lakh MT of foodgrains to the States/UTs under NFSA, Other Welfare Schemes and allocations due to natural calamities and festivals. During the current year i.e. 2020-21, the Government of India has so far allocated 943.53 lakh MT of foodgrains under NFSA, OWS, Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyaan Anna Yojana, Atmanirbhar Bharat and other additional allocations. The scheme of End-to-End Computerization of the PDS has ensured rightful targeting of the beneficiaries all over the country.

Government of India has issued advisories to all States/UTs to identify and cover the weakest sections of the society under PDS and launch special drives to issue ration cards to them. Advisories have been issued to all State/UTs that no beneficiary/household shall be deleted from the list of eligible beneficiaries/households only on the grounds of not possessing Aadhaar and shall also not be denied subsidized foodgrains or cash transfer of food subsidy under NFSA due to non-availability of Aadhaar or failure of biometric authentication.