

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

LOK SABHA

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.3602**

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 10<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2021

**IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION CAMPAIGN**

†3602: SHRI SHANKAR LALWANI

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री be pleased to State;

(a) whether the campaign for eradicating hunger and malnutrition has suffered a setback due to COVID-19;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether COVID-19 has affected the food production and supply in the country to a great extent and if so the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री (SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

(a) to (b): During the pandemic, Government has taken various measures in order to ensure food and nutritional security in the country, the details of which are as follows;

Under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojna (PMGKAY), it was decided by the Govt. to provide additional allocation of food-grain (i.e. Rice, Wheat or combination of both) @ 5 kg per person per month free of cost for all the beneficiaries covered under Targetted Public Distribution System (Antyodaya Anna Yojna & Priority Households) including those covered under Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) for a period of 3 months i.e April-June, 2020 (PMGKAY-Phase-I). Later on, extension of PMGKAY was done for a further period of 5 months i.e. up to November 2020 (PMGKAY-Phase-II).

In view of the 2nd wave of Covid-19 Pandemic, Govt. of India decided to provide additional foodgrains, free of cost @ 5 Kg per person per month to all the beneficiaries covered under NFSA over and above NFSA foodgrains for two months i.e. May and June 2021 (PMGKAY-Phase-III). Further, the Govt of India has decided to continue the PMGKAY Scheme till November, 2021 (PMGKAY-Phase-IV). In this Phase, additional

allocation of food-grain of approx. 198.78 LMT has been made for distribution to approx. 80 Crore NFSA beneficiaries.

Also under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKAY), pulses were distributed for a period of three months- April to June, 2020 to ameliorate the hardships faced by the poor due to livelihood disruption caused by COVID-19. The Government of India further announced extension of PMGKAY beyond the initial period of April-June, 2020 until the end of November, 2020. During the five months' period (July to November, 2020) 1 kg whole chana was provided free of cost to each family per month to beneficiaries already identified under the NFSA.

**(c):** No Sir. During the lockdown, the agriculture sector had functioned smoothly. Government of India has taken all necessary measures to ensure smooth operation of agriculture related activities. Farming and allied activities were exempted from the lockdown. Production of total food grains increased from 297.5 million tonnes in 2019-20 to 305.44 million tonnes in 2020-21 (As per third Advance Estimate). Following steps were taken to ensure supply of food items during the pandemic;

- All wholesale mandis were closed on 25.03.2020. However, more than 2,067 markets were made functional to facilitate the farmers during Covid.
- Direct Marketing was facilitated ; Farmer Producer Organizations supplied vegetables in nearby cities and towns.
- “KISAN RATH APP” was launched in April, 2020 to facilitate farmers & traders in searching for transport vehicles for movement of agriculture & horticulture produce.
- 415 e-NAM mandis were made operational during the Covid period to take the total e-NAM mandis in the country to 1000.
- As far as paddy is concerned, in comparison to 2019-20 when there were 67127 procurement centres, in 2020-21 during Covid 19 the number of procurement centres were increased to 74609. Similarly, for wheat, the number of procurement centres increased from 14644 to 20163 during the Covid period.
- Kisan Rails were operated for the first time from July, 2020 to facilitate movement of perishable Agri-Horticulture commodities.

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