

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.419
TO BE ANSWERED ON 24th JULY, 2024

NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY ACT

419 SHRI MAGUNTA SREENIVASULU REDDY:

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

- (a) whether it is true that under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) through the Public Distribution Scheme, 67% of the total population, using the rural-urban population ratio in 2011, is meant to be covered;
- (b) whether the Government is aware that due to the usage of outdated population data from 2011, millions of intended beneficiaries are being left out of the scheme and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has any plans to plug the data gaps of the PDS so that all intended beneficiaries can be reached;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, before the new Census data is available, the manner in which the Government plans to redress the significant number of people being excluded from PDS; and
- (e) the details of the measures taken by the Government to ensure Food Security in the Country in wake of the pandemic?

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

(a) & (b): The NFSA provides for coverage upto 75% of rural population and upto 50% of urban population for receiving highly subsidized foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), thus covering about two-thirds of the total population which at Census 2011 comes to 81.35 crore. Coverage under the Act is substantially high to ensure that all the vulnerable and needy sections of the society get its benefit. Further, against the intended coverage of 81.35 crore, the States/UTs have identified only 80.54 crore person. Still, there is a scope of identification of 0.81 crore more beneficiaries under the NFSA.

States/ Union Territories have also 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.

(c) & (d): Section 9 of the Act provides that the total number of persons to be covered in rural and urban areas of the State shall be calculated on the basis of the population estimates as per the Census of which the relevant figures have been published. Therefore, any revision in coverage shall be possible only after the relevant data of next population Census is published.

(e): Government undertook timely and concrete measures to ensure that there are no long term effects of the Covid-19 crisis on food security and nutrition in the country. To fulfill this objective, Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) was launched to ensure that the targeted beneficiaries do not face any issue of food security on account of the pandemic.

During Covid period, PMGKAY provided for additional allocation of foodgrains @ 5 kg per person per month free of cost for all the beneficiaries covered under Targeted Public Distribution System (Antyodaya Anna Yojana & Priority Households). This was over and above the monthly benefit provided under the National Food Security Act, 2013 to about 80 crore persons.
