

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 541
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23RD JULY, 2025

PDS IN TAMIL NADU

541. SHRI THARANIVENTHAN M S:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of beneficiaries currently covered under the Public Distribution System (PDS) including Arani Lok Sabha Constituency of Tamil Nadu;
- (b) the quantity of foodgrains distributed through PDS during the last three years;
- (c) whether the Government has implemented any technology-driven reforms like Aadhaar-based authentication, ePDS or online monitoring systems to ensure proper distribution and curb malpractices, and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has any plans to expand the coverage of PDS to include nutritious food items like millets, vegetables or fortified foods and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) whether the Government is considering any reforms to the PDS and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER
MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS,
FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRIMATI NIMUBEN JAYANTIBHAI BAMBHANIYA)

(a): The National Food Security Act, 2013 provides for coverage of about 62.55% of the rural and 37.79% of the urban population for receiving foodgrains free of cost under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) in the State of Tamil Nadu, which at Census 2011 comes to about 364.69 lakh persons. At present against the intended coverage of 364.69 lakh persons, the State Government has identified 364.12 lakh beneficiaries in Tamil Nadu including Arani Lok Sabha Constituency.

(b): About 23.41 LMT, 23.36 LMT and 23.35 LMT foodgrains have been distributed in FY 2022-23, FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25 respectively under PMGKAY in Tamil Nadu including Arani Lok Sabha Constituency.

(c): Under TPDS reforms, for better monitoring of foodgrains distribution, almost all FPSs have been automated by installation of e-PoS devices for the distribution of food-grains in a transparent manner (electronically) through biometric /Aadhaar authentication of PMGKAY beneficiaries. The distribution is done through Aadhaar authentication to curb the leakages and ensuring the transparency in PDS System.

(d): Under the National Food Security Act, 2013, the term “foodgrains” is defined as rice, wheat or coarse grains or any combination thereof conforming to such quality norms as may be determined, by order, by the Central Government from time to time. Therefore, the millets are already part of PDS. At present, no proposal to include more commodities under the Act, is under consideration of the Government.

To improve the level of nutrition, an advisory has been issued to all the States/UTs to procure millets and distribute them to beneficiaries as per local consumption preferences and as per guidelines issued by the Central Government from time to time.

(e): As part of the technology driven Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) reforms, with the aim to enhance transparency and improve efficiency in the TPDS, ration cards/beneficiaries database have been completely digitized (100%) in all States/UTs. The transparency portal and online grievance redressal facility/Toll-free number have been implemented in all States/UTs. Also, online allocation has been implemented in all States/UTs and supply chain has been computerized in 31 States/UTs (except UTs of Chandigarh, Puducherry and Urban area of Dadra & Nagar Haveli which have adopted DBT Cash Transfer scheme).
