

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

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 533
TO BE ANSWERED ON 1ST APRIL, 2026

REDUCTION OF DEPENDENCY ON FREE FOODGRAINS

***533. SHRI P V MIDHUN REDDY:**

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

- (a): whether the Government is planning to reduce the dependency of over 81 crore people on free foodgrains and if so, the details of the steps being taken by the Government to promote selfsufficiency among these beneficiaries;
- (b): whether there are any initiatives or schemes designed by the Union Government to assist States like Andhra Pradesh in transitioning from free foodgrain distribution to employment and skill development programmes and if so, the details thereof;
- (c): the details of the additional support, if any, being provided by the Union Government to Andhra Pradesh to ensure the efficient distribution of free foodgrains to those in need and to tackle challenges related to poverty and food insecurity; and
- (d): the manner in which the Union Government ensures that the State's most vulnerable populations are adequately covered under food distribution programmes while promoting long term economic stability?

A N S W E R
MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTRY
OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY
(SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 533* (13TH POSITION) DUE FOR ANSWER ON 1ST APRIL, 2026 REGARDING “REDUCTION OF DEPENDENCY ON FREE FOODGRAINS”

(a) & (b): No sir, there is no proposal for reduction of coverage under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY).

The Central Government has launched several national initiatives aimed at enhancing employability and self-reliance among youth, including those in Andhra Pradesh. Government of India through its various programmes and policies has prioritised skill development to create self- and wage-employment opportunities, and has moved from fragmented, low-scale skilling efforts towards creating a larger, more coordinated, digitally enabled, and education-integrated skilling and entrepreneurship ecosystem. Under Skill India Mission (SIM), the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) delivers skill, re-skill and up-skill training through an extensive network of skill development centres under various schemes, viz. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS), National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) and Craftsman Training Scheme (CTS) through Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), to all the sections of the society across the country.

(c): The Central Government provides additional support to all States/UTs including State of Andhra Pradesh by providing foodgrains free of cost to the States/UTs through Food Corporation of India (FCI), for which food subsidy is released to FCI. Only in the case of States participating in the Decentralized Procurement (DCP), under which State Government take responsibility of procurement of foodgrains and its distribution to the eligible households, that food subsidy is released directly to State Governments.

The Central Government also provides the assistance to States/UTs in prescribed funding pattern (i.e. 50:50 for the State of Andhra Pradesh) for meeting the expenditure towards last mile delivery of foodgrains and fair price shop dealers' margin for distribution of foodgrains to entitled beneficiaries.

(d): The PMGKAY provides for coverage of upto 75% of rural population and upto 50% of urban population for receiving foodgrains free of cost covering about two-thirds of the total population which at Census 2011 comes to 81.35 crore. The coverage of beneficiaries is substantially high to ensure that all the vulnerable and needy sections of the society get its benefit. The Central Government has issued advisories to all the States/Union Territories from time to time to identify all eligible and poor persons/ households including vulnerable Sections of the Society for inclusion under the NFSA. States undertake updation of their beneficiary database so that ineligible ration cards get deleted and better targeting of rightful beneficiaries is ensured. Thus, deletion of ineligible beneficiaries and addition of eligible beneficiaries under the Act is a continuous process.
