

Government of India
Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
Department of Consumer Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4335
TO BE ANSWERED ON 18.03.2026

PRICE STABILITY OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES

4335. SMT. PRATIMA MONDAL:

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

- (a) whether essential commodities continue to witness volatile price rises and what structural measures beyond ad hoc export bans are being implemented;
- (b) whether the Government has not expanded National Food Security Act coverage in line with updated population data, potentially excluding eligible beneficiaries; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI B.L. VERMA)

(a) : Department of Consumer Affairs monitors the daily prices of 40 essential food commodities submitted by the 578 price monitoring centres across the country. As per the data, prices of food commodities are stable and under control.

Price Stabilisation Fund (PSF) and Price Support Scheme (PSS) have been integrated under the Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA) to achieve convergence between the two schemes for supporting the farmers and protecting the consumers. Under the convergence framework, all procurement, including the procurement of pulses for buffer, at Minimum Support Price (MSP) are done under the PSS and procurement at market prices for buffer are done under PSF.

Government maintains buffer stock of pulses and onion under Price Stabilisation Fund (PSF) to tackle extreme volatility in the prices and in ensuring the availability of these essential food commodities to consumers at affordable prices. Fluctuations in domestic production, seasonal variations in demand and speculative activities of market players often leads to volatility in the prices of pulses. Regulated release of pulses from the buffer to augment the availability helps in cooling down the market prices, and retail sale to consumers at discounted prices ensures availability of dals at affordable prices. Market interventions through buffer stock also helps in nudging the market players lower their prices. Further, buffer stock of pulses with the government acts as deterrent against manipulative hoarding and unscrupulous speculations by market players. In case of onion, the buffer stock plays critical role in controlling the seasonal fluctuation in prices. The period between Rabi and Kharif onion harvests is associated with rise in prices due to the depletion in stored Rabi onions. Onions from the government buffer are released during this lean season in regulated and targeted manner to augment the market availability and stabilise the prices.

(b) & (c) : The National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) successfully implemented in all the States/UTs aims to supplement the food requirements of upto 75% of the rural and upto 50% of the urban population, which as per Census 2011 comes to 81.35 crore persons. At present, against the intended coverage of 81.35 crore, the States/UTs have identified 79.90 crore beneficiaries.

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 better targeting of rightful beneficiaries is ensured and ineligible beneficiaries get deleted. Thus, deletion of ineligible beneficiaries and addition of eligible beneficiaries under the Act is a continuous process.
