

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

**LOK SABHA**  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5485  
**TO BE ANSWERED ON 25<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2026**

**NFSA IN MAHARASHTRA**

**5485. SHRI MOHITE PATIL DHAIRYASHEEL RAJSINH:  
SMT. SUPRIYA SULE:**

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

- (a): whether the Government is aware that Maharashtra has identified the maximum permissible number of beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act, 2013, ensuring wide coverage of food security for rural and urban households in the State and if so, the details thereof;
- (b): the details of the steps taken by the Government to strengthen Aadhaar-based and alternative authentication mechanisms including OTP-based verification to ensure smooth distribution of foodgrains and prevent exclusion of genuine beneficiaries due to biometric or connectivity-related issues;
- (c): whether any monitoring or audit mechanisms are in place to assess the functioning of Fair Price Shops in Maharashtra particularly in rural and remote areas to ensure transparency and timely delivery of entitlements; and
- (d): whether the Government proposes to further enhance Union–State coordination, grievance redressal systems and use of digital technology to improve efficiency, accountability and beneficiary satisfaction under the Targeted Public Distribution System in Maharashtra and if so, the details thereof?

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

---

(a): The National Food Security Act (NFSA) 2013, provides for coverage of 76.32% of the rural and 45.34% of the urban population in the State of Maharashtra, for receiving free of cost foodgrains, which at Census 2011 comes to 700.17 lakh persons. The State Government of Maharashtra has identified 681.42 lakh beneficiaries for receiving free of cost foodgrains under the Act, which is about 97.32% of the intended coverage.

(b): Under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State Governments, the responsibility for identification of beneficiaries, within the coverage determined for the State/UT and issuance of their ration cards rest with the concerned States/UTs.

DFPD's notification issued vide SO No. 371 [E] dated 08/02/2017 [as amended from time to time] under Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services)

Act, 2016 ("Aadhaar Act"), requires the individual beneficiaries having Ration Cards under NFSA to undergo Aadhaar authentication to receive subsidies under NFSA.

Further, all States/UTs have been advised vide this Department's letter dated 24/10/2017 that no genuine beneficiary/household shall be denied from receiving entitled quota of subsidized foodgrains due to failure of biometric/Aadhaar authentication due to network/connectivity/linking related issues, other technical reasons or poor biometrics of the beneficiary."

(c): In order to ensure transparency and accountability in Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), the Act provides for periodic social audits on the functioning of fair price shops, Targeted Public Distribution System and other welfare schemes, through local authority, or any other authority or body, as may be authorized by the State Government. The Central Government may also conduct or cause to be conducted social audit through independent agencies having experience in conduct of such audits

Further, the Act provides for constitution of Vigilance Committees at the State, District, Block and fair price shop levels for ensuring transparency and proper functioning of the TPDS and accountability of the functionaries in the system.

(d): In order to improve the efficiency, accountability and beneficiary satisfaction, the Government has taken following steps for modernization of Public Distribution System in all States/UTs are as follows –

(i) Ration cards/beneficiary's database have been completely digitized (100%) in all States/UTs. 99.7% of ration cards have been Aadhar seeded.

(ii) The transparency portal and online grievance redressal facility/Toll-free number have been implemented in all States/UTs.

(iii) 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).

(iv) The nationwide portability of ration cards, popularly known as One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) has been implemented in all 36 States/UTs, covering all Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) beneficiaries. As on date, more than 207 Crore portability transactions have been recorded under ONORC.

(v) More than 5.50 Lakh (99.8%) out of total 5.51 Lakh Fair Price Shops (FPSs) in the country have been automated by installing ePoS devices for the distribution of foodgrains through Aadhaar biometric authentication of beneficiaries.

\*\*\*\*\*