

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

**LOK SABHA**  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 6175  
**TO BE ANSWERED ON 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL, 2026**

**BPL AND APL**

**6175. SHRI BHASKAR MURLIDHAR BHAGARE:**

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

- (a): whether the Government has assessed the percentage of population living Below Poverty Line (BPL) in various parts of Maharashtra particularly in backward rural and tribal districts and the total number of people living below poverty line in the State;
- (b): whether prices of foodgrains and other essential commodities at Fair Price Shops for families living Above Poverty Line (APL) in Maharashtra are equal to or higher than open market prices;
- (c): whether the Government has taken or proposes to take steps to reduce the prices of foodgrains, sugar, kerosene and pulses for BPL and APL families under the Public Distribution System;
- (d): if so, the details of these measures, their current status and expected timeline of implementation; and
- (e): the steps being taken by the Government to ensure timely distribution, prevent leakage and improve monitoring of PDS operations in tribal and backward districts of Maharashtra?

**A N S W E R**

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

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(a): The Public Distribution System (PDS) is now governed as per the provisions of the National Food Security Act (NFSA) 2013, which 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. Identification of beneficiaries under the Act is under two categories - Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) and priority households (PHH). There is no Above Poverty Line (APL) or Below Poverty Line (BPL) category under the Act.

(b) to (d): Under the Act, the Government is already distributing free of cost foodgrains to eligible beneficiaries identified by the State Government. 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. There is no provision for distribution of sugar, kerosene and pulses under the Act.

(e): In order to improve the monitoring, ensure timely distribution and prevent leakage, the Government has taken following steps for modernization of Public Distribution System in all States/UTs (including State of Maharashtra) 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.

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