

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2002
TO BE ANSWERED ON 12TH MARCH, 2021

ERADICATION OF HUNGER IN THE COUNTRY

2002: SHRI BIKASH RANJAN:

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

the steps that have been taken by the Central Government to eradicate hunger in in the country and achieve a better rank in the United Nation's Global Hunger Index?

A N S W E R
MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD &
PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI DANVE RAOSAHEB DADARAO)

As per information available in the public domain (<https://www.globalhungerindex.org/download/all.html>), India ranks 94 in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2020 report brought out by Concern Worldwide and Welthungerlife. As per GHI Reports, the composite GHI scores of India have improved from 38.9 in 2000 to 27.2 in 2020. Thus, the country has shown consistent improvement over the years. The GHI is a composite index based on following indicators namely:

- (i) the percentage of population that is undernourished (1/3rd weightage);
- (ii) percentage of children under five years old who suffer from wasting and stunting (1/3rd weightage); and
- (iii) child mortality (1/3rd weightage).

The Government of India accords high priority to the issue of hunger and has been providing foodgrains at highly subsidized prices to the targeted population through State Governments/Union Territory Administrations under National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013 and Other Welfare Schemes (OWS). NFSA provides for coverage of upto 75% of the rural population and upto 50% of the urban population (67% of the total population of the country) for receiving foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) @ Rs 1/2/3 per kg for nutri-cereals/wheat/rice respectively. Identification of beneficiaries under the Act is under two categories- households covered under Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) and Priority Households (PHH). Priority Households are entitled to receive 5 Kg per person per month and AAY households are entitled to receive 35 Kg of foodgrains per household per month. At present, the Act is being implemented in all the States/UTs covering about 79.37 crore persons to get highly subsidized foodgrains. The coverage under the Act is substantially high to ensure that all the vulnerable and needy sections of the society get its benefit.

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The Act also contains provisions for nutritional support to pregnant women and lactating mothers and children upto 14 years of age. One of the guiding principles of the Act is its life cycle approach wherein special provisions have been made for pregnant women and lactating mothers and children in the age group of 6 months to 14 years, by entitling them to receive nutritious meal free of cost through a widespread network of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) centres, called Anganwadi Centres under ICDS scheme and also through schools under Mid-Day Meal (MDM) scheme.

During the year 2019-20, the Government allocated a quantity of 605.72 lakh MT of foodgrains to the States/UTs under NFSA, Other Welfare Schemes and allocations due to natural calamities and festivals. During the current year i.e. 2020-21, the Government of India has so far allocated 948.19 lakh MT of foodgrains under NFSA, OWS, Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyaan Anna Yojana, Atmanirbhar Bharat and other additional allocations. The scheme of End-to-End Computerization of the PDS has ensured rightful targeting of the beneficiaries all over the country.

The implementation of NFSA through the Public Distribution System (PDS) is a joint responsibility of the Central and State Governments/UT Administrations. The State Governments/UT Administrations are responsible for the identification of beneficiaries and distribution of foodgrains to them. Government of India has issued advisories to all States/UTs to review their lists of beneficiaries under NFSA, launch special drives to identify and cover the weakest sections of the society under PDS and issue ration cards to them.

Further, some very critical programme and schemes have been launched by the Government in last 3-4 years particularly, POSHAN Abhiyaan, Anemia Mukht Bharat, Centrally Sponsored Pilot Scheme on Fortification of Rice & its Distribution under PDS, Home Based Newborn Care, Home Based Care of Young Child with the aim to improve Health and Nutrition outcomes particularly of Women and Children.
