

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

RAJYA SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.709  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 3<sup>RD</sup> DECEMBER, 2021

STARVATION IN THE COUNTRY

709 SHRI K.C. VENUGOPAL:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION  
उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Global Hunger Index report 2021 placed India at 101 position among 116 countries way behind, Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan despite tonnes and tonnes of our foodgrains and vegetables go waste;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that around 19 crore people in the country are still compelled to sleep every day without a morsel of food and if so, reasons therefor; and
- (d) whether Government has no plan to extend the free ration scheme despite these kind of reports, if so, reasons therefor?

A N S W E R

MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND CONSUMER  
AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION  
(SADHVI NIRANJAN JYOTI)

(a) to (c): As per information available in the public domain (<https://www.globalhungerindex.org/download/all.html>), India's ranking in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2021 brought out by Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe is 101. Nepal and Bangladesh are ranked 76 and Pakistan is ranked 92. As per GHI Reports, the composite GHI scores of India have improved from 38.8 in 2000 to 27.5 in 2021. Thus, the country has shown consistent improvement over the years. The calculation of GHI is based on four indicators – Undernourishment, Child Stunting, Child Wasting and Child Mortality.

Global Hunger Index (GHI) does not reflect India's true picture as it is a flawed measure of "Hunger". Only one indicator, i.e. undernourishment, is directly related to hunger. The two indicators i.e. Stunting and Wasting are outcomes of complex interactions of various other factors like sanitation, genetics, environment, and utilization of food intake apart from hunger which is taken as the causative/outcome factor for stunting and wasting in the GHI. Also, there is hardly any evidence that the fourth indicator i.e. child mortality is an outcome of hunger.

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Government of India enacted National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013 which provides for coverage of upto 75% of the rural population and upto 50% of the urban population thus addressing the hunger alleviation of the bottom 67% of the population, which at Census 2011 is at a maximum limit of 81.35 crore persons. 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 @ Rs 1/2/3 per kg for coarsegrains/wheat/rice respectively. The Act is operational in a seamless manner across all States/Union Territories. The coverage under the Act is substantially high to ensure that all the vulnerable and needy sections of the society get its benefit.

Government of India has issued advisories to all States/UTs to identify and cover the weakest sections of the society under TPDS and launch special drives to issue ration cards to them upto the respective NFSA coverage limits.

(d): Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) scheme under which beneficiaries covered under NFSA are given additional 5 kg of foodgrains (Wheat or Rice) per person per month, free of cost, has been extended for another four months i.e. from December, 2021 to March 2022.

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