

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1796
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29TH JULY, 2026

SHORTAGE/REDUCTION OF PDS STATE QUOTA

1796 SHRI SURESH KUMAR SHETKAR:

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

- (a) whether the Government has reduced allocation of rice and wheat to States under Public Distribution System (PDS) during last three years and current year and if so, the details thereof and the reasons for curtailing essential food security support;
- (b) whether several States have reported shortage of PDS commodities including pulses, sugar and edible oil and if so, details thereof along with corrective measures taken by the Government to address rising public distress;
- (c) whether the Government admits mismatch between population growth and fixed National Food Security Act (NFSA) coverage leading to reduced per capita allocation and if so, the reasons for not revising beneficiary limits based on updated population data;
- (d) whether allocation of wheat has been curtailed in recent years due to procurement constraints and if so, the details thereof including the steps taken by the Government to ensure adequate supply to deficit States; and
- (e) whether the Government has shifted focus from wheat to rice distribution due to stock imbalances and if so, the details of the impact on nutritional diversity and regional consumption preferences across States?

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

(a): The overall allocation of foodgrains under the Public Distribution System (PDS) to States/UTs has largely remained unchanged during the last three years and the current year. Due to lower procurement of wheat during the Rabi Marketing Season (RMS) 2022-23, the Department temporarily revised the wheat-rice ratio under National Food Security Act (NFSA) and Tide Over categories for certain States/UTs based on the availability of wheat in the Central Pool. The revision was undertaken to ensure uninterrupted distribution of foodgrains under the PDS, without any reduction in the overall foodgrain entitlement of beneficiaries.

(b): Only Wheat, Rice and Coarse grains are currently distributed through PDS and no State has reported shortage of these foodgrains.

(c): Allocation of foodgrains to States/Union Territories (UTs) under the Act is made on the basis of identification of beneficiaries reported by the States/UTs within the State/UT-wise coverage of population determined by the then Planning Commission, and foodgrains entitlement prescribed under the Act i.e. 35 kg per household per month for households covered under Antyodaya Anna Yojana and 5 kg per person per month for Priority households.

NFSA provides for coverage of upto 75% of rural population and upto 50% of urban population thus covering about two-thirds of the total population of the country which at Census 2011 comes to 81.35 crore. Coverage under the Act is substantially high to ensure that all the vulnerable and needy sections of the society get its benefit.

Section 9 of the Act provides that the total number of persons to be covered in rural and urban areas of the State shall be calculated on the basis of the population estimates as per the Census of which the relevant figures have been published. States undertake updation of their beneficiary database so that ineligible ration cards get deleted and better targeting of rightful beneficiaries is ensured.

(d) & (e): As indicated in reply to part (a), the revision in the wheat-rice ratio for certain States/UTs was necessitated by lower procurement of wheat and was undertaken to ensure uninterrupted distribution of foodgrains under the PDS, without any reduction in the overall foodgrain entitlement of beneficiaries under the NFSA. With improvement in the availability of wheat in the Central Pool, wheat allocation has since been restored w.e.f. January, 2026 to the eligible States/UTs. The revision in the wheat-rice ratio was an operational measure based on procurement and availability of wheat in the Central Pool and did not represent any policy shift from wheat to rice distribution.
