

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.923
TO BE ANSWERED ON 08.12.2023

GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX

923. SHRIMATI MALA ROY:

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that millions of people in India go hungry every day because they live in abject poverty;
- (b) if so, the reason for contesting findings of the Global Hunger Index reports; and
- (c) if not, the need for extending the free ration scheme?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) to (c) The Government is implementing the National Food Security Act (NFSA), which provides for coverage upto 75% of rural population and upto 50% of urban population for receiving highly subsidized foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), thus covering about two-thirds of the total population which as per Census 2011 comes to 81.35 crore persons. Coverage under the Act is substantially high to ensure that all the vulnerable and needy sections of the society get its benefit.

The Central Government, in order to remove the financial burden of the poor beneficiaries and to ensure nationwide uniformity and effective implementation of the Act, has decided to continue to provide free foodgrains to about 81.35 crore NFSA beneficiaries at an approximate cost of Rs. 11.80 lakh crore under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojna (PMGKAY) for a period of five years with effect from 1st January 2024.

There is no report from any State/UT on people going hungry every day because of abject poverty. The effective implementation of TPDS and schemes like Ujjwala is ensuring that no one in the country goes hungry due to lack of food.

Global Hunger Index continues to be a flawed measure of 'Hunger' and does not reflect India's true position. The index is an erroneous measure of hunger and suffers from serious methodological issues. Three out of the four indicators used for calculation of the index are related to health of children and cannot be representative of the entire population. The fourth and most important indicator 'Proportion of Undernourished (PoU) population' is based on an opinion poll conducted on a very small sample size of 3000.