

Supply of free food grains to about 95% of the total 2.8 Crore Migrants / Stranded Migrants estimated by States/UTs under Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme

About 2.65 LMT food grains successfully distributed under the scheme up to 31st August 2020 by all States/UTs

Posted On: 01 SEP 2020 7:22PM by PIB Delhi

In wake of the situation created by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of India in May, 2020 had announced a set of economic measures under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Package (ANBP) to help mitigate the problems of the migrant workers across the country.

Pursuant to this, with an intent to help maximum number of migrants / stranded migrant persons, and all those who were neither covered under NFSA nor under any other State PDS scheme, all over the country to meet their food-security requirements amidst the crisis situation, hereafter referred as 'target group', the Department of Food & Public Distribution on 15th May 2020 had liberally allocated a total quantity of about 8 LMT of food grains to all States/UTs which was communicated to all States/UTs under the "Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme (ANBS)" for free-of-cost distribution to all migrants / stranded migrant persons at a scale of 5 Kg per person per month for a period of 2 months i.e. 4 LMT each for the months of May and June 2020. This was subject to numbers of such 'target group' on the ground and this assessment was immediately made by the States and UTs by the end of May while going through the process of distribution.

The scheme had full in built flexibility to ensure that no deserving person was left out and accordingly, the on-ground responsibilities of identification of eligible migrants / stranded migrants and other needy persons and subsequently distribution of food-grains to them under this scheme was given to State/UT governments and all States/UTs were given complete freedom to issue their own guidelines and SOPs to districts/field level functionaries to identify any person who didn't possess any central/state scheme ration card or was not able to access food-grains due to crisis.

Accordingly, rigorous efforts were made by the Food Departments of all States/UTs and many of them also collaborated with their counterpart Labour Departments, District Administrations, Civil Societies, Industrial Associations, NGOs and other welfare organizations to identify maximum of such migrants / stranded migrant persons anywhere in their State/UT in labour camps, construction sites, persons in transit, quarantine centers, shelter homes, etc. While the process of identification and distribution of food grains was steadily progressing, many States/UTs had informed that a majority of migrant persons have already left their States/UTs and may be having access to NFSA and PMGKAY food-grains in their respective State/UT where they may be having their ration cards. Thus, States/UTs collectively indicated a total population of about 2.8 Cr. such persons who could potentially benefit from the distribution of free-of-cost food-grains under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme (ANBS).

By the time assessment was made by States/UT of the magnitude of the 'target group', as a matter of abundant precaution, they had as per the reports available from FCI, by the end of June 2020, lifted a total quantity of about 6.38 LMT food grains. However, after assessment, the requirement was found to be about 2.8 LMT to serve approximately 2.8 Crore beneficiaries per month. As a result, no state government faced a situation where Central Govt was found under-catering to their requirement.

Again, taking a liberal and humane view, upon request of some State/UT governments, this Department extended validity of the ANBS i.e. the distribution period of the already lifted food-grains in balance with States/UTs up to the 31st of August 2020.

As per the reports available from States/UTs, a total quantity of about 2.65 LMT food grains has been successfully distributed under the scheme up to 31.08.2020 by all States/UTs combined, covering 2.35 Cr. persons in May 2020, over 2.48 Cr. persons in June 2020, about 31.43 Lakh persons in July 2020 and nearly 16 Lakh migrant persons in August 2020(About 2.65 Crore persons on an average per month for the months of May and June respectively). Therefore, having served all identified and deserving 'target group' the scheme has been very successful in serving about 95% of the total 2.8 Cr. migrants/stranded migrants' population estimated by the States/UTs.

About 17 States/UTs were able to utilize 80% or more food-grains in relation to their assessment. The States/UTs are Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Bihar, Chandigarh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu And Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Puducherry, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.

APS/SG/MS

(Release ID: 1650442)