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Title: Need to enhance the allocation of rice under PDS in Lakshadweep.

MOHAMMED FAIZAL (LAKSHADWEEP): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. I am going to raise a very important issue pertaining to my constituency, Lakshadweep.

Madam, you may be aware that the total quantity of rice supplied under PDS to Lakshadweep is 4620 MT and that allocation is based on the 2001 census. Now, we have cleared the 2011 census. We have covered even four years. In spite of that, not even a single quantity of enhancement has been given to Lakshadweep. You know that Lakshadweep is fully dependent on the PDS because there is no other private rice seller or paddy grower because Lakshadweep is geographically very much isolated.

This being the situation, on the 1st August, 2015, Lakshadweep administration had implemented the National Food Security Act (NFSA) covering 33 per cent of the population. This 33 per cent which is covered by the NFSA is from the existing allocation, that is, 4,620 MT. Now, the issue is because of the less allocation. Madam, 4 kg. of rice has been reduced from the tide over quantity which is called the APL quantity. There is a huge crisis over Lakshadweep for the rice.

Lakshadweep is peculiarly having a combined family system. Unlike in other places where they have micro system, we have the macro system. In one ration card, there will be 10 to 15 persons. Hence, reducing 4 kg. in the APL quantity is creating problem. Madam, 4 kg. in the APL quantity is around 50 to 60 kg. of rice, which has been reduced by implementing NFSA. I have a say on the NFSA coverage.

When the Government of India is covering 90 percentage under the NFSA, that is, Rs. 3 per kg. of rice in the North Eastern States, Lakshadweep also face a similar situation. As I stated earlier, Lakshadweep is a geographically isolated area where 100 per cent population is the Scheduled Tribes. There is no scope for growing any paddy or anything. I am sure, other States will have the issue regarding the NFSA. I know that the House would join me on this issue. I want your support, Madam, on this.

There are two options with the Government of India. Once the NFSA is implemented in a place, then, there is no subsidized rice supplied to the tide over quantity. The only available facility as of now is the Open Market Supply at economic rate which cost Rs.35 per kg. The financial status of Lakshadweep people is very less. You know that the entire population is categorized as the Scheduled Tribes. Not even a single person is capable of buying rice at Rs.35 per kg. I have raised this issue in the House several times. I had met Shri Ram Vilas Paswan, and I wrote to him several times; and requesting him to take Lakshadweep as a special case. You will not believe, Madam, that I had personally met the hon. Prime Minister with my Party President, Shri Sharad Pawar to consider Lakshadweep as a special case.

We do not want 1,000 or 2,000 MT per month. I am just asking for 100 MT a month which is just a sweeping of quantity from our godowns. Our godowns are having plenty of stocks as of now. I think only because of the restriction, we are not in a position to give. Either the Government should come out with a solution to amend that Bill. Till such time, I urge upon the Government that the tide over quantity may be enhanced to 140 MT per month or to resume the supply of subsidy which will at least satisfy the people because of the critical condition in Lakshadweep, which is laying very far away.

I have to raise the issue before you only. Madam, you have to take it very seriously to inform the Government, at least, Shri Paswan to give at least 140 MT of rice per months as APL quantity. Thank you very much, Madam.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Rajeev Satav is allowed to associate with the issue raised by Shri Mohammed Faizal.