

Congress Parliamentary Party

Sonia Gandhi
Chairperson

April 13, 2020

Dear Prime Minister,

I hope this letter finds you well. Lakhs of vulnerable people across the country face chronic food insecurity due to the lockdown. This is tragic given that India has large buffer stock of food grains precisely for exigencies like the current pandemic.

I welcome your decision to provide free of cost, 5kg grain/person in addition to the entitlements under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) from April-June, 2020. However, given the adverse impact of the lockdown and its prolonged impact of people's livelihoods, I write to you to consider a few suggestions.

Firstly, the provision of 10 kg grains/person to NFSA beneficiaries must be extended for an additional period of 3 months i.e. till September, 2020. Given the chronic economic distress faced by these beneficiaries, the food entitlements may be provided free of cost.

Secondly, 10 kg grains/person may be provided free of cost, for a period of 6 months, to those who may be facing food insecurity but not holding ration cards. I would like to bring to your notice that all migrant labour who have been facing acute distress may not be holding NFSA cards. In addition, many deserving people have been excluded from the NFSA lists.

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The current crisis has pushed many relatively food secure families into food insecurity and poverty. Population increases since 2011 have not been considered for determining each State's entitlement under NFSA.

The above measures are critical to safeguard people against food inflation, at a juncture where supply chain disruptions are causing price rise. Furthermore, the release of food grains to the states as suggested above will help create storage space with Food Corporation of India (FCI) to ramp up Rabi season procurement of Wheat and Rice.

In our fight against the pandemic we must ensure that no one faces hunger.

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Truly Sincerely Sonia Gandhi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Shri Narendra Modi
Hon'ble Prime Minister
7, Lok Kalyan Marg
New Delhi