

दिल्ली रोज़ी रोटी अधिकार अभियान

Delhi Rozi Roti Adhikar Abhiyan

The Delhi Rozi Roti Adhikar Abhiyan is extremely concerned about the poor state of implementation of the National Food Security Act, 2013, (NFSA) in Delhi. The NFSA came into force in Delhi on September 1, 2013 yet the Delhi government has till date not put in place the requisite resources and mechanisms to operationalize the law properly.

As per data available on the NFSA Delhi website, the government has identified and given out AAY ration cards to only 76,456 families, filling less than 50% of the 1,56,800 quota of AAY cards which residents of Delhi are entitled to. Large numbers of homeless, transgender and poor people have been left out of the purview of the food security Act due to the unnecessary conditionalities and documentation requirements prescribed by the Delhi government through guidelines for obtaining benefits under the Act. The multi-conditional inclusion and exclusion criteria set by the Delhi government, which include arbitrary exclusion criteria like wattage of electricity meter, have led to many deserving households being excluded from their NFSA entitlements.

The Maternity Entitlement due under the NFSA is still running as a pilot scheme even after almost three years of the enactment of the Act. In Delhi, it is operational in a pilot mode in only 2 districts. Evidence suggests that even in those districts, unnecessary conditionalities and documentation requirements are preventing pregnant and lactating women from benefitting from this much needed monetary and nutritional support.

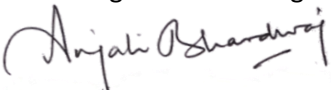
The Delhi government has not introduced any enhancements in the form of provision of eggs, fruits or milk through the mid-day-meal scheme or through anganwadis for young children.

The Aam Aadmi Party's manifesto for the Delhi Assembly Elections in 2015 states under the heading 'Economic Vision': "Statistics show that the income of Delhi and its citizens has risen, but in reality, due to the rise in costs of all basic necessities such as electricity, water, vegetables, food grains, petrol, diesel, education and health, the true economic situation of most families is worse than before. The complete solution to this problem requires a change in policies of the central government. **However, the state government can independently take several steps to improve the situation.**" One of the measures to significantly reduce the burden of inflation on the common man outlined is to "end corruption in the public distribution system with the involvement of Mohalla Sabhas. We will ensure direct transfer of ration material to the families. We will also ensure dal and oil in the public distribution system."

However, the AAP government of Delhi has not delivered on the promises made in its election manifesto on issues of food security. It has not operationalized transparency and accountability provisions prescribed in the NFSA like social audits of ration shops, proactive disclosure of information etc. In fact there has been a roll back on transparency measures through discontinuation of Saturday public audit mechanism and stoppage of SMS alerts that informed people about the date of delivery of ration to their FPS. Despite its promise, the government has not made any provision for providing dal or oil under the PDS in Delhi.

There is widespread corruption and apathy within the system that refuses to acknowledge the conditions that the poor and vulnerable in the country are living in. Growing children, single women without support, the old and the infirm and the poor and vulnerable in all walks of life are inevitably the worst sufferers every time due to this insensitive attitude of the powers that be. We expect the Aam Aadmi Party to deliver on their promises on food security.

Enclosed is the Charter of Demands for the effective implementation of the NFSA, 2013 from the Delhi Right to Food Campaign. It is imperative to ensure that the demands listed are given due consideration and incorporated while allocating the Delhi budget.



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Charter of Demands for the Delhi Budget 2016-17 from the Delhi Rozi Roti Adhikar Abhiyan

We demand that the Delhi government ensure adequate budgetary provision and support for ensuring food security for all residents of Delhi. While NFSA is a centrally funded legislation, the Delhi Government is free to provide additional entitlements/benefits from its own resources to ensure food security for its residents, as promised in its election manifesto.

Specifically, we demand that the government ensure adequate budget for-

1. Providing pulses, oil and sugar to all food security cardholders, irrespective of category to which they belong- AAY or priority.
2. Immediately implementing maternity entitlements across all districts of Delhi.
3. Providing egg, fruits and milk for children everyday through the mid-day meal scheme and through anganwadis.
4. Enhancing food security coverage beyond the population norm stipulated in the NFSA as many poor and marginalised people, especially the homeless, transgender and migratory workers have been left outside the purview of the Act.
5. Implementing and operationalizing all the transparency and accountability provisions in the NFSA Act, including- carrying out of periodic social audits (S. 28), grievance redress including internal mechanism within the department, setting up of State Food Commission, training of GR officials, resources for awareness creation regarding GR provisions (Chapter VII), transparency of records (S. 12(2)(d)), proactive disclosure of records (S. 27), proper functioning of Vigilance Committees (s. 29).

Further we demand that in order to ensure food security for residents of Delhi, the government-

1. Immediately fill the remaining quota of 80,344 AAY cards allotted to Delhi by identifying eligible households.
2. Amend the guidelines issued by the Delhi government to identify eligible households under NFSA and remove the multi-layered inclusion/exclusion criteria which has resulted in many needy families being deprived, especially arbitrary exclusion criteria like wattage of electricity meter. Replace the multi layered inclusion/exclusion criteria with a simplified exclusion criteria.
3. Put in place simplified procedure to ensure that the most vulnerable categories, especially the homeless and transgenders, are not left out of the purview of the NFSA due to lack of documents like proof of residence and identity.
4. State its explicit commitment to not allowing PPP models or pre-packed food models to take root in Delhi to replace hot cooked meals and take home rations which are guaranteed under the NFSA.
5. Ensure adequate budgetary provision for universal pensions for the elderly, widows and single women in vulnerable sections, and the disabled as access to financial security is a pre-requisite to accessing even the most basic entitlements under PDS. Providing “adequate pensions for senior citizens, persons with disability and single women” is the statutory obligation of the state government under Section 31 of the NFSA read with Schedule III of the law.