

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1791
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04/08/2023

FACIAL RECOGNITION TECHNOLOGY IN PM-KISAN APP

1791. SHRI JAWHAR SIRCAR:

Will the Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is introducing facial authentication technology for PM-KISAN app;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether this technology is foolproof against hacking and if not, the manner in which data of beneficiaries will be protected;
- (d) whether there is a provision for seeking consent for facial recognition and data management, and if so, whether consent has been taken; and
- (e) who will have access to this data and who will guarantee privacy of personal data?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

(SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

(a) & (b) Yes, Sir. The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has introduced facial Authentication based eKYC in the PM-KISAN Mobile Application since June, 2023. Facial Authentication feature allows the farmers, even in remote areas, to complete their e-KYC without needing OTP or biometrics, merely by scanning their faces. The provision has been made to allow e-KYC of up to 100 other farmers in their neighborhood through the app. The Government Officials have also been allowed to complete 500 e-KYCs through their registered mobile numbers. The beneficiary must install the latest PM-KISAN Mobile Application and UIDAI Face RD service application for Facial Authentication from Google Play Store.

(c) PM-KISAN Scheme is a flagship scheme of the Government of India. The PM-KISAN application have been developed and maintained by NIC. The application is hosted on NIC's secured cloud. All Aadhaar-related transactions are being provided through NIC global AUA/KUA and all compliances related to data privacy, security, and UIDAI are strictly followed. Further certified auditors periodically audit the application and mobile app to safeguard farmers' personal information on the application.

(d) & (e) Yes, Sir. Beneficiaries' consent is taken before initiating the process of facial authentication. The PM-KISAN mobile face authentication app is an interface between the UIDAI face RD app and the beneficiary, the UIDAI Face RD app captures the beneficiary's face and completes the process of face authentication with back-end support from UIDAI. No information is stored on the device or the PM-KISAN server. Hence, beneficiaries' data privacy is fully secured.
