

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1159
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10TH FEBRUARY, 2026

MANDATORY AADHAAR-BASED E-KYC

1159: DR. FAUZIA KHAN:

Will the Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution be pleased to state:

- (a): whether there exists widespread exclusion caused by mandatory Aadhaar-based e-KYC in the Public Distribution System, which has led to millions of ration cardholders being denied food subsidies due to biometric failures, network issues and systemic errors;
- (b): if so, the details thereof;
- (c): whether urgent steps are being taken to provide alternative verification options and robust grievance redressal to prevent denial of food security to vulnerable populations such as migrant workers, manual laborers and elderly citizens; and
- (d): if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

A N S W E R
MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS,
FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRIMATI NIMUBEN JAYANTIBHAI BAMBHANIYA)

(a) & (b): No State-wise reports of denial of foodgrains to entitled beneficiaries due to Aadhaar based eKYC, biometric authentication failure, server downtime, or other digital verification issues have been received in this Department. All States/UTs have been consistently advised that no beneficiary or household shall be denied their entitled quantity of foodgrains on account of biometric or Aadhaar authentication failure arising from network connectivity issues, technical reasons, Aadhaar seeding issues, or poor biometric quality. States/UTs have been instructed to follow the prescribed alternative and exception-handling mechanisms to ensure uninterrupted access to foodgrains.

(c) & (d): Multiple authentication modes have been provisioned under the Public Distribution System (PDS), including Single Finger, Fusion Finger, Iris, and Aadhaar-based OTP authentication. Fusion Finger authentication has shown a success rate of around 99%, thereby minimizing authentication failures.

In cases where authentication by one household member fails, other eligible family members linked to the ration card are permitted to authenticate and draw foodgrains. Additionally, a nominee facility has been provided in exceptional cases, allowing beneficiaries to authorize another individual to lift ration on their behalf. These measures ensure that eligible beneficiaries

are not denied their entitlements.

The Department has taken several steps to strengthen grievance redressal in the Public Distribution System. Major initiatives include:

1. Strengthened Grievance Redressal Systems

- Universal availability of 1967/1800-series toll-free helplines across all States/UTs.
- Introduction of Anna Sahayata, an advanced AI-enabled
- WhatsApp and IVRS-based grievance redressal system, allowing beneficiaries to lodge complaints in their own language.
- Mera Ration Mobile App, which enables beneficiaries to check their entitlements, member and demographic details, last month's distribution status, nearby FPS location, and to lodge grievances directly through the app.

2. Enhanced Monitoring through CPGRAMS

- States/UTs and all concerned organisations have been sensitised to strictly adhere to the 21-day timeline for grievance disposal prescribed under CPGRAMS.
- Pendency of grievances is monitored regularly through CPGRAMS dashboards.
- Monthly advisories are issued to States to promote uniform and timely grievance resolution.
- States/UTs with high pendency levels are specifically flagged for corrective action.

These steps collectively strengthen grievance redressal mechanisms, improve transparency and help ensure that all beneficiaries receive their rightful foodgrain entitlements in a timely and transparent manner.
