

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3733
TO BE ANSWERED ON 16TH JULY, 2019

RISE IN HUNGER DEATHS RELATED TO AADHAAR LINKING

3733. SHRI DIBYENDU ADHIKARI:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government agrees that starvation is still the scourge of our country;
- (b) if so, the detailed report on hunger deaths in India since 2010, and the action taken to support the families thereof;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that on mandatory linking of Aadhaar with PDS, starvation rate has grown-up as a sizable number of PDS beneficiaries do not have Aadhaar and bank account for the purpose;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the status of the implementation of Supreme Court orders on Aadhaar exclusions therefor; and
- (e) the details of the action taken by the Government to reach to every single people of the country with PDS items?

A N S W E R

MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD &
PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI DANVE RAOSAHEB DADARAO)

(a) to (e): A few reports have of late appeared in the media citing non-linking of Aadhaar with Ration Cards as one of the reasons for the difficulties faced by the beneficiaries under NFSA in getting their entitled quota of foodgrains. In this regard, as per available records and received information from the State Governments, allegations made in the media reports of deaths due to starvation have not been substantiated.

Further, provisions of the Notification issued under the Section-7 of the Aadhaar Act 2016, vide SO No. 371[E] dated 08/02/2017 [as amended from time to time] by the Department, all eligible beneficiaries entitled to receive subsidized foodgrains, under the National Food Security Act 2013 [NFSA], who do not possess Aadhaar number or, are not yet enrolled for Aadhaar, but are desirous of availing the subsidized foodgrains, are required to make an application for Aadhaar enrolment by 30/09/2019, and also linking of Aadhaar with Ration Cards/Beneficiaries ensure correct identification of beneficiaries and their rightful delivery of subsidized foodgrains under NFSA.

This Department has issued instructions to all States/UTs vide letter dated 24/10/2017 that no beneficiary/household shall be deleted from the list of eligible beneficiaries/households only on the ground of not possessing an Aadhaar number, and shall also not be denied from subsidized foodgrains or cash transfer of food subsidy under NFSA due to failure of biometric/Aadhaar authentication because of network/connectivity/ linking issues/ poor biometric of the beneficiary or other technical reasons. This Department has again issued instructions to all States/UTs vide letter dated 08/11/2018 that owing to failure of biometric/Aadhaar authentication, no genuine beneficiary shall be denied from foodgrains entitled under NFSA.

Streamlining and upgradation of Targeted Public Distribution System [TPDS] is a continuous process. Department of Food & Public Distribution is implementing a Scheme on 'End-to-End Computerisation of TPDS Operations' on cost sharing basis with the States/UTs. The Scheme consists of activities namely, digitization of ration cards/beneficiary and other databases, computerisation of supply-chain management, setting up of transparency portals and grievance redressal mechanisms and installation of ePoS devices at Fair Price Shops.
