

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.108
TO BE ANSWERED ON 7TH DECEMBER, 2022**

SENSORS AT PDS SHOPS

**108. SHRIMATI POONAM MAHAJAN:
SHRI RAJESHBHAI CHUDASAMA:**

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 is planning to install biometric sensors at all PDS shops in the country as a part of One Nation One Ration Card scheme;**
- (b) if so, the steps to be taken to ensure that such electronic equipment which requires internet connections work efficiently in remote places having no internet connectivity;**
- (c) whether the Government has taken any measures to ensure access to ePoS as digital illiteracy would lead to inaccessibility of this equipment to the general public; 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 RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SADHVI NIRANJAN JYOTI)**

(a): Under Public Distribution System (PDS) Reforms, the Department in November 2014 had issued implementation guidelines to all States/UTs for the installation of electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) devices with biometric scanners in all Fair Prices Shops (FPSs) for transparent, efficient and ensured distribution of the subsidised foodgrains to the beneficiaries, covered under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), through digital transactions and as far as possible with biometric authentication of beneficiaries. So far, more than 5.33 Lakh (99.8%) of total 5.34 Lakh FPSs in the country are having ePoS devices. The availability of these devices with biometric authentication facilities at the FPSs in States/UTs is a key enabler of ration card portability under the One Nation One Ration Card (ONROC) plan for distribution of foodgrains to the beneficiaries from any FPS of their choice in the country.

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(b): To ensure the availability of internet/connectivity for ePoS devices at FPSs in remote locations / shadow/no network areas in some States, a list of such FPS locations has been shared with the Department of Telecommunications to resolve the internet/connectivity related issues. Further, with the availability of the One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) plan in most States/UTs, the beneficiaries are empowered to lift their entitled foodgrains from any FPS having operational ePoS device without facing any internet/connectivity related challenges.

(c) & (d): The process of distributing foodgrains through ePoS devices is very simple and does not require any special digital literacy among beneficiaries to lift their entitled foodgrains through electronic transactions. However, periodically trainings are provided to FPS dealers to use the ePoS devices. Besides, time to time trainings are also conducted for the State/District level officials and other field functionaries to ensure efficient and smooth technology driven PDS operations. Further, States/UTs are advised to ensure that ePoS printed transaction receipts are provided to all beneficiaries in local language, besides SMS are sent on their registered mobile numbers to ensure complete transparency in distribution process.
