

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

**LOK SABHA**  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1451  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 4<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2024

**DIGITALIZATION OF PDS**

1451. SHRI MANI A:

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

- (a) the details of progress of digitalization efforts under the Public Distribution System across States including Dharmapuri district of Tamil Nadu;
- (b) the details and the number of Fair Price Shops (FPS) that have been equipped with digital infrastructure for automated operations;
- (c) the main objectives of digitalizing the PDS and whether the digitalization has impacted the efficiency and transparency of the distribution process;
- (d) if so, whether there have been any measurable reduction in pilferage and leakages of PDS resources since the introduction of digital systems;
- (e) the current status of Aadhaar-based authentication and e-Point of Sale (ePOS) machines at FPSs for beneficiary verification;
- (f) the challenges that have been encountered in implementing digital solutions under the PDS particularly in remote or rural areas; and
- (g) whether the Government has taken steps to improve internet connectivity in rural regions to support uninterrupted digital PDS operations and if so, the details thereof?

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

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(a) & (b): Under PDS reforms, ration cards/beneficiaries database have been completely digitized in all States/UTs. So far more than 5.41 lakh out of total 5.43 lakh Fair Price Shops (FPSs) in the country (including the State of Tamil Nadu) have been automated by installing ePoS devices.

Presently, 100% ration cards are seeded with Aadhaar number in the State of Tamil Nadu. All 34,805 Fair Price Shops (FPSs) in the Tamil Nadu have been automated by installing ePoS devices.

(c) & (d): The main objectives of digitalizing the PDS is to improve the efficiency and transparency of the distribution process and to address various challenges such as leakages and diversion of foodgrains. As an outcome of the use of technology in TPDS operations since 2013, i.e., digitization of ration cards/beneficiary databases, Aadhaar seeding, de-duplication process, identification of duplicates, ineligible records, deaths, permanent migration of beneficiaries, etc. all States/UTs have been able to weed-out approx. 5.87 crore ration cards between 2013 to 2024 (till date) in order to achieve rightful targeting.

(e): 5.41 lakh Fair Price Shops (FPSs) have been automated by installing ePoS devices for the distribution of foodgrains with biometric/Aadhaar authentication of beneficiaries.

(f) & (g): To ensure the availability of internet/connectivity for ePoS devices at FPSs in remote locations / shadow/no network areas in some States, the Department of Telecommunications has been requested to resolve the internet/connectivity related issues. The beneficiaries are empowered to lift their entitled foodgrains from any FPS having operational ePoS device without facing any internet/connectivity related challenges. The ePoS devices have a functionality to work in offline mode with limited/ no internet connectivity. The ePOS devices have to come periodically to network area to sync the offline ePOS data with PDS online system.

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