

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2222
TO BE ANSWERED ON 12TH MARCH, 2025

EXPANSION OF EPOS SYSTEM

2222. SHRI THARANIVENTHAN M S:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) the current status of the implementation of the electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) system at Fair Price Shops (FPSs) in Tamil Nadu and the number of FPSs in the State that have been successfully automated using the ePoS system so far;
- (b) whether the introduction of ePoS system improve the transparency, efficiency and accountability of the Public Distribution System (PDS) in Tamil Nadu and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the measures being taken by the Government to ensure that the ePoS system functions effectively across both urban and rural areas and the beneficiaries are able to access their entitled foodgrains and other subsidized items without difficulty;
- (d) whether any challenges have been faced in the implementation of the ePoS system at FPSs such as technical issues, connectivity problems or lack of digital literacy and if so, the manner in which the Government is addressing these challenges; and
- (e) the plans of the Government for expanding the ePoS system to cover all FPSs in Tamil Nadu?

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

(a) & (b): Under the technology driven PDS reforms, at present, all 34,805 Fair Price Shops (FPSs) in the State of Tamil Nadu have been automated by installing ePoS devices for seamless distribution of foodgrains in a transparent manner (electronically) through biometric/ Aadhaar authentication of beneficiaries. It improved the transparency, efficiency and accountability in distribution of foodgrains in Public Distribution System (PDS).

(c) & (d): 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. Further, the beneficiaries are empowered to lift their entitled foodgrains under One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) 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.

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. 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.

(e): At present, all 34,805 Fair Price Shops (FPSs) in the State of Tamil Nadu have been automated by installing ePoS devices for seamless distribution of foodgrains in a transparent manner (electronically) through biometric/ Aadhaar authentication of beneficiaries.
