

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5453
TO BE ANSWERED ON 25TH MARCH, 2026

AUTHENTICATION FAILURE IN PDS

5453. DR. AMAR SINGH:

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

- (a): the number of Public Distribution System (PDS) transactions that failed due to biometric authentication failure or connectivity and server issues since 2023, year and State/UT-wise;
- (b): whether the Government maintains data on beneficiaries who were denied ration due to authentication failure;
- (c): if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons for not maintaining such data;
- (d): the details of the number of cases where exception or offline mechanisms were used to ensure ration delivery despite authentication failure since 2022, State/UT and year-wise; and
- (e): whether any assessment has been conducted to establish a clear link between mandatory biometric authentication and reduction in leakages and if so, the details and findings thereof?

A N S W E R

MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS,
FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(**SHRIMATI NIMUBEN JAYANTIBHAI BAMBHANIYA**)

(a) & (b): No such consolidated data regarding Public Distribution System (PDS) transactions failing due to biometric authentication failure, connectivity or server issues has been reported by the States/UTs to the Department of Food and Public Distribution (DFPD).

(c): Since no such instances of denial of ration due to authentication failure have been reported by the States/UTs to DFPD, no centralized data is maintained in this regard.

(d): The Department has consistently advised all States/UTs that no eligible beneficiary should be denied foodgrains under any circumstances, including cases of authentication failure or technical issues. States/UTs have been directed to adopt appropriate exception handling mechanisms, such as OTP-based authentication, offline distribution modes, or other State-specific provisions.

During the year 2025, 98.47% of total PDS transactions were completed through Aadhaar-based authentication, indicating the robustness of the system. The remaining transactions were facilitated through alternative mechanisms as per State/UT guidelines to ensure uninterrupted service delivery.

(e): No such assessment has been conducted. Though, the adoption of Aadhaar-based biometric authentication under the Public Distribution System has been an integral component of the Government's efforts to curb leakages and improve targeting of beneficiaries.

Various assessments and field-level observations have indicated that biometric authentication has helped in:

- Eliminating duplicate beneficiaries through Aadhaar seeding and de-duplication,
- Ensuring that foodgrains are delivered to the rightful beneficiaries, and
- Enhancing transparency and accountability in distribution at Fair Price Shops (FPS).

Further, initiatives such as One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) and real-time electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) transactions have strengthened monitoring and reduced diversion of foodgrains.

These measures collectively contribute towards minimizing leakages and improving efficiency in the PDS.
