

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3418
ANSWERED ON:23.08.2011
BIO-METRIC MACHINES UNDER PDS
Maadam Shri Vikrambhai Arjanbhai

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

- (a) the number of Below Poverty Line (BPL) card holders in Delhi;
- (b) whether the use of bio-metric machines under PDS has been initiated in Delhi recently;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and its impact on the use of fake BPL cards and diversion of foodgrains;
- (d) whether there are complaints of tampering of the said machines by Fair Price Shop owners;
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the remedial steps taken in this regard; and
- (f) the policy of the Government for extension of this technology to the entire country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a) to (c): As reported by Government of National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi, the total number of Below Poverty Line (BPL) including Antyodaya Anna Yojna (AAY) card holders in Delhi is 363581. It has been further reported that bio-metric machines have been used for preparation of fresh Above Poverty Line (APL) cards and review of existing BPL/AAY cards. During the bio-metric review of ration cards in 2010, 50534 BPL including AAY cardholders did not turn up for bio-metric identification. The supplies of Specified Food Articles against these cards have been stopped by the Government of NCT of Delhi.

(d) & (e): As reported by Government of NCT of Delhi, no instance of tampering of said machines by Fair Price Shop owners has come to the notice of the State Government.

(f): Government of India has taken up the computerization of Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) in a phased manner to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the TPDS. In the first phase, the scheme on Computerization of TPDS Operations had been approved to be implemented on pilot basis in three districts each of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh and Delhi. A pilot scheme on Smart Card based delivery of essential commodities had been initiated in Chandigarh UT and Haryana. Under the scheme, existing ration cards were to be replaced by Smart Cards. After assessment of the pilot schemes, a scheme for remaining States/UTs shall be taken up.