

F. No. 23(5)/2015 – Comp. Cell (Pt. –I)(E: 330469)  
Government of India  
Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution  
Department of Food & Public Distribution  
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R. No. 275, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi – 110001

Dated 28/05/2019

To

Principal Secretary/Secretary,  
Food & Civil Supplies Department,  
Government/Administration of – All States/UTs

**Subject: Advisory for implementation of adequate/alternate facilities for ensured biometric/Aadhaar authentication of beneficiaries at FPSs – reg.**

Madam/Sir,

You are aware that the automation of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) along with seeding of Aadhaar numbers with all ration cards/beneficiaries, under the scheme of End-to-End Computerization of PDS Operations, is being done with an aim to bring transparency in the functioning of Public Distribution System (PDS) and also to achieve rightful targeting of food subsidy by means of biometric/Aadhaar authentication of beneficiaries.

2. Section-12 of the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) provides for the use of ICT and leveraging of “Aadhaar” for unique identification of entitled beneficiaries for proper targeting of the benefits. Further, Hon’ble Supreme Court of India has also held it necessary for those, who desires to receive benefits/subsidy from the Consolidated Fund of India, to undergo biometric/Aadhaar Authentication at the time of receiving such benefits/subsidy. It is therefore, imperative for all State/UT governments to implement facilities for biometric/Aadhaar authentication of beneficiaries in all FPSs.

3. As per the reports appearing on Annavitran portal, it is observed that a significant number of attempted biometric/Aadhaar authentication of beneficiaries are getting failed every month in a number of States/UTs. Besides technical/connectivity related reasons, there may be situations where an individual/beneficiary may not be able to successfully complete the finger-print based biometric/Aadhaar authentication, due to change of fingerprints for various reasons, may be due to old age or damage to the fingers as a result of accident or some disease etc. or because of suffering of some kind of disability for whatever reason, etc. Thus, it becomes essential to provide additional Aadhaar authentication mechanism at the FPSs, say, IRIS-based biometric/Aadhaar authentication, as an alternate method for ensured biometric/Aadhaar authentication of beneficiaries at all FPSs.

4. Also, it is also pertinent to mention here that the Hon’ble Supreme Court has given a leeway for use of alternative mechanisms, for establishing identity of genuine beneficiaries, in a situation where the attempted biometric/Aadhaar authentication including IRIS fails due to

certain reasons including blindness of the person.

5. State/UT Governments are therefore suggested to also consider implementation of IRIS-based facility alongside fingerprints based mechanism with ePoS devices, for ensured biometric/Aadhaar authentication of all beneficiaries at the FPSs. In this regard, actions taken report may also be shared with this Department.

Yours faithfully,

Signature valid

Digitally signed by DINESH  
KUMAR GUPTA  
Date: 2019.03.18:03:51 IST  
Reason: Approved

(D. K. Gupta)

Director (PD)

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Copy to:

Sh B V C Rao, (HOD), Sr Technical Director, NIC HQ, Delhi