

Face Capturing and e-KYC already completed for 75.12 % of eligible beneficiaries registered for Take Home Ration

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Under the 15th Finance Commission, various components like Anganwadi services, Poshan Abhiyaan and Scheme for Adolescent girls (of 14-18 years in Aspirational Districts and North-Eastern region) have been subsumed under the umbrella Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 (Mission Poshan 2.0) to address the challenge of malnutrition. It is a Centrally Sponsored mission, where the responsibility for implementation of various activities lies with the States and UTs. This mission is a universal self-selecting umbrella scheme where there are no entry barriers for any beneficiary to register and receive services.

Under this mission, Supplementary Nutrition is provided to Children (6 months to 6 years), Pregnant Women, Lactating Mothers and Adolescent Girls to beat the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition by adopting a life cycle approach. Supplementary nutrition is provided in accordance with the nutrition norms contained in Schedule-II of the National Food Security Act. These norms have been revised in January 2023. The old norms were largely calorie-specific; however, the revised norms are more comprehensive and balanced in terms of both quantity and quality of supplementary nutrition based on the principles of diet diversity that provides for quality protein, healthy fats and micronutrients.

Face Recognition System (FRS) Module was initially implemented as a pilot in the month of August 2024. It was implemented on an optional basis pan India in the month of December 2024. Since then, duty holders in the States and UTs have been trained to perform facial recognition and verify beneficiaries with Aadhaar database. It is implemented since July 1, 2025 for ensuring last mile delivery of take-home ration to the rightful beneficiary. The FRS module has been developed as part of Poshan Tracker application. To verify a beneficiary through Aadhaar identification, eKYC is performed along with capturing of liveliness image of the beneficiary. This onboarding process is performed once in the lifetime of the beneficiary on Poshan Tracker. For availing benefits of take-home ration on monthly basis, face matching can be performed both in online and offline mode and no repeated eKYC is required. The offline mode feature has been developed keeping in consideration the areas with low digital connectivity. The Facial Recognition feature has been made compatible for low end version phones as well. Bal Aadhar for children under 5 years of age doesn't contain any biometric data; therefore, for children aged upto 6 years, the FRS of the mother/father/guardian is being done and not that of the child.

As on 5th August 2025, face capturing and e-KYC of 3.69 crore THR beneficiaries out of the 4.91 crore eligible beneficiaries registered for Take Home Ration (THR), which is almost 75.12%, have already been completed.

Regular training and handholding sessions have been conducted by NeGD State Coordinators. Further, field visits by officials of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, GoI. and regular meetings with State officials have also been conducted to understand and redress technical difficulties.

Various Data Protection Safeguards exist in the system. Some of them are mentioned below:

- The data of the beneficiary, which is collected, is subject to all existing data protection protocols, which mandates purpose limitation, informed consent, and access restrictions.
- All requests and responses related to Face Verification are encrypted during transit, ensuring data is protected from interception or tampering.

- No images or data are stored permanently on the device. As a precautionary measure, all cached or temporary data is wiped automatically when the Anganwadi worker logs out of the application.
- The private data is not publicly accessible; it is only available to authorized personnel solely for verification purposes.
- The Poshan Tracker application is typically used by Anganwadi Workers and it is not open to the public or any unauthorized party. Access is role-based, logged and monitored to prevent misuse.
- Further, the application's internal database is encrypted, preventing access to sensitive information outside the app environment
- Face images are handled in encoded format within the app to ensure safe processing and transmission.

This information was given by the Minister of State for Women and Child Development Smt. Savitri Thakur in Lok Sabha in reply to a question today.

SS/MS

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