

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1273
TO BE ANSWERED ON 30.07.2025

FACIAL RECOGNITION UNDER POSHAN ABHIYAN

1273. SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN:

Will the Minister of Women and Child Development be pleased to state:

- (a) whether any exemptions have been provided to beneficiaries who are not able to undergo facial recognition, If so, the details thereof and if not, details of the number of deprivation incidents due to the same and the reasons therefor;
- (b) whether the honorarium of Anganwadi workers will be increased considering the additional burden on them on account of the facial recognition system and the details thereof; and
- (c) the safeguards in place to protect the privacy and biometric data of young children and women being collected through the Poshan Tracker app, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SAVITRI THAKUR)

(a) For last mile tracking of delivery of Take Home Ration (THR), Facial Recognition System (FRS) has been introduced. It is meant to ensure that the THR is given only to the intended beneficiary registered in Poshan Tracker. FRS has been implemented also for strengthening accountability of field functionaries while simultaneously empowering the eligible beneficiaries to receive their rightful entitlements. It involves Photo capturing of the beneficiaries and e-KYC during registration, and then capturing photo again during THR distribution for matching of the photos. Mobile network is required for completing e-KYC which is to be done only once and not after that. Thereafter the face matching can be done even in offline mode. No further OTP will be required. As on 27 July, 2025, face capturing and e-KYC of 3.55 crore out of the 4.95 crore eligible THR beneficiaries, which is almost 71.7%, have already been completed.

FRS facility has also been made available in the beneficiary module on the Poshan Tracker where the beneficiary can herself capture her photo and complete the e-KYC process based on

Aadhar system from her home/any place through the beneficiary module. Regular training and handholding sessions have also been conducted for State officials for smooth implementation of FRS.

(b) Government of India increases the honorarium of Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) and Anganwadi Helpers (AWHs) from time to time. From 1st October, 2018, Government of India has enhanced the honorarium of AWWs at main -Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) from Rs. 3000/- to Rs. 4500/- per month; AWWs at mini- AWCs from Rs. 2250/- to Rs. 3500/- per month; AWHs from Rs. 1500/- to Rs. 2250/- per month as per the defined cost sharing ratio.

Besides, performance linked incentives of Rs. 500/- is provided to AWWs and Rs. 250/- per month to AWHs. In addition, States/UTs are also paying additional monetary incentives/top ups to these functionaries from their own resources which vary from State to State.

(c) Multiple Data Protection Safeguards exist in the system. The data of the beneficiary, which is collected, is subject to existing data protection protocols, which mandates purpose limitation, informed consent, and access restrictions. 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 AWWs, not open to the public or any unauthorized party. Access is role-based, logged and monitored to prevent misuse. Bal Aadhar for children under 5 years of age doesn't contain biometric data. Therefore, for children aged (6 months to 6 years), the FRS of the mother/father/guardian is being done.
