

(c) No, Sir. As per Section 8-9 read with section 92 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, a manufacturer or service provider who causes a false or misleading advertisement can be imprisoned by a competent court on a complaint filed by the CCPA or any officer authorised by it in this behalf.

Starvation deaths

727. SHRI NARAIN DASS GUPTA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of starvation deaths that have been reported between 2017-2019, ever since Aadhaar became mandatory to avail subsidised foodgrains and cash transfer of food subsidy;

(b) the number of the deceased who were denied ration due to unavailability of Aadhaar card or related software problem; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to address the fatal lapses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DANVE RAOSAHEB DADARAO): (a) to (c) A few reports have of late appeared in the media citing non-linking of Aadhaar with Ration Cards as one of the reasons for the difficulties faced by the beneficiaries under NFSA in receiving their entitled quota of foodgrains. However, as informed by the concerned State Governments, the allegations made in the media reports of deaths between 2017-2019 due to starvation have not been substantiated.

Further, as per the provisions of the Notification issued under the Section-7 of the Aadhaar Act 2016, vide SO No. 371[E] dated 08/02/2017 (as amended from time to time) by the Department of Food & Public Distribution, Government of India, all the eligible ration card holders/beneficiaries entitled to receive subsidized foodgrains or Cash Transfer of Food Subsidy, under the National Food Security Act 2013 [NFSA], who do not possess an Aadhaar number or, are not yet enrolled for Aadhaar, but are desirous of availing the subsidized foodgrains or Cash Transfer of Food Subsidy, have been given time to enrol themselves for Aadhaar and subsequently ensure linking of Aadhaar/EID number with their ration card by 31/12/2019.

Furthermore, this Department *vide* letter dated 24/10/2017 has issued instructions to all States/UTs that no eligible beneficiary/household shall be deleted from the list

of eligible beneficiaries/households only on the ground of not possessing an Aadhaar number, and shall also not be denied from subsidized foodgrains or cash transfer of food subsidy under NFSA due to failure of biometric/Aadhaar authentication because of network/ connectivity/ linking issues/ poor biometric of the beneficiary or other technical reasons. It has also been directed that in such cases, benefits under NFSA shall be provided based on physical production of Aadhaar card in place of biometric authentication of beneficiary.

These instructions were re-iterated to all States/UT *vide* letter dated 08/11/2018 that owing to failure of biometric/Aadhaar authentication or Aadhaar related failures, no genuine beneficiary shall be denied from foodgrains entitled under NFSA.

Miserable living condition of cattle

728. DR. L. HANUMANTHAIAH: Will the Minister of FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the bad treatment of cattle in large scale farms, such as the cattle being forced to live in unacceptable conditions in large, dark rooms without windows/natural sunlight, lie in their own feces all day without good quality feed and lack of healthcare;

(b) if so, whether Government has taken or proposes to take any action in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING (SHRI SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN): (a) There are some news reports that cattle are being ill-treated and kept in conditions which are unacceptable.

(b) and (c) As per Section 3 of the Prevention of Cruelty Animals Act, 1960, it shall be the duty of every person taking care or charge of any animal to take all reasonable measures to ensure the well-being of such animal and to prevent the infliction of unnecessary pain or suffering. Cruelty to animals is an offense under Section 11(1) of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 and its Rules and also as per the provisions of the State laws. Further, Section 11(1) (h) of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 provides that it is a cruelty, if any person, being the owner of (any