Denial of Rations

Why in news?

Recently Supreme Court asked the centre to respond to a PIL alleging that ration cards were cancelled due to insistence on Aadhaar linkage.

What are the findings of the survey related to this?

- In 2019 National Election Study (NES), people were asked whether they had been denied food grains due to non-possession of Aadhaar or failure of biometric authentication.
- Based on the responses from the ration-card (RC) holding households, it turned out that one in four households were denied food grains due to such issues.
- Moreover the frequency of such denial was on rise that has raised the concern over food security.
- Ever since Aadhaar-based biometric authentication was introduced in PDS, people complain about fingerprints not getting confirmed, no backup of iris poor Internet connection.
- This has forced people to spend on another trip to the shop.

What are the other findings in the survey?

- This seeding and authentication problems not only occur in remote areas but also in urban areas.
- In rural areas, 28% of respondents belonging to RC-holding households were refused ration due to Aadhaar-related issues and in urban areas this was around 27%.
- In both rural and urban areas, the poorest were worst affected – 39% of households whose monthly income below Rs 2,000 -were at some point denied PDS ration due to Aadhaar problems.
- There was a striking difference noticed based on the responses of the Hindi-speaking heartland states vis-à-vis the other states.
- In the Hindi belt-'Bimaru' states- as many as 40% of RC-holding households reported a denial of ration due to Aadhaar issues as compared to 20% households in the rest of the country.
- The problem was less due to non-possession of Aadhaar and more due to biometric authentication and server issues.

- In states like Bihar, Jharkhand, MP, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh the situation is as grave as the NES data suggests.
- The proportion of RC-holding households who were denied ration due to Aadhaar-related factors was: Rajasthan-36%; Chhattisgarh, -39%; MP& Jharkhand- 40%; Bihar, high as 56%.

Source: The Indian Express

