

Mr. Arvind Kejriwal  
Chief Minister of Delhi  
Government of NCT of Delhi

October 15, 2015

Dear Mr. Kejriwal,

**Subject- Problems in implementation of the National Food Security Act in Delhi**

The Delhi Rozi Roti Adhikar Abhiyan had held a public hearing on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September, 2015 on the challenges faced by people in accessing their entitlements under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) in Delhi. Mr. S.S Ghonkrokta, Special Commissioner, Food Supplies & Consumer Affairs Deptt. had attended the public hearing.

Based on the testimonies presented at the public hearing, we have compiled below the key problems which people are facing in accessing their food entitlements and possible strategies to address them. We request you to kindly take cognisance of these problems and address them at the earliest-

1. Many people belonging to 'geographically, socially and occupationally vulnerable groups' as defined in the guidelines issued by the Delhi government (homeless, transgender, handicapped), are not being able to secure ration cards due to procedural difficulties like requiring ID proof, address proof etc.
2. Despite repeated Supreme Court orders, Aadhaar is being illegally made mandatory by the Delhi government for getting entitlements under the NFSA, resulting in a very large number of poor across Delhi being denied their subsidised food grains and other benefits. Some members of the household, especially young children, are being left out in the list of members on the ration card resulting in lower monthly entitlements because of unavailability of Aadhaar.
3. Scores of poor and marginalised families are being left out of the NFSA due to the exclusion criteria defined by the Delhi government guidelines which state that households which have an electricity connection above 2 KW or those that own building/land in 'E' category colonies in Delhi, are not eligible for entitlements under NFSA.
4. Extremely poor quality of ration being supplied and irregularities in quantity of grains being provided in various circles under the NFSA.
5. Ineffective and lack of time-bound grievance redress mechanism for resolving complaints related to NFSA resulting in complaints regarding accessing ration entitlements lying unaddressed for several months.
6. Roll back of transparency measures in Delhi related to PDS in violation of the NFSA 2013 and the RTI Act 2005, including - stopping SMS service whereby people used to be informed about the date of delivery of ration to their FPS, non-implementation of weekly public audit of ration records, no mechanisms being put in place to operationalise social audits as mandated by NFS Act, lack of proactive disclosure of relevant information outside the ration shops and circle offices and non-display of samples of grains outside Fair Price Shops.

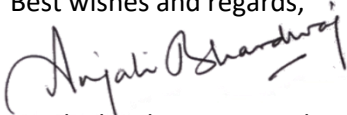
7. A large number of families are not getting ration as they have not received their new ration cards, even though the NFSA website shows that their card has been approved and that their ration supplies are being sent to the shop.
8. Distance from Ration shop- In many places, peoples' ration cards have been attached to FPSs which are located at a considerable distance from their place of residence thereby making it difficult and economically unviable for people to access their entitlements under NFSA.
9. There is no proper mechanism for ongoing monitoring and feedback related to implementation of NFSA in Delhi.

A detailed note discussing each of the problems mentioned above is enclosed as Annexure 1 with this letter. Case studies of some of the people who testified at the public hearing on the issues listed above, are enclosed as annexure 2.

We urgently request a meeting with you to discuss the issues highlighted in the letter and note.

Thank you,

Best wishes and regards,



Anjali Bhardwaj, Dipa Sinha, Annie Raja, Amrita Johri, Vimla, Snehlata, Abdul Shakeel, Rajender Kumar, Kailash, Sachin Awasthy, Koninika Ram, Shabina, Madan, Shashi Paul  
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(On behalf of the Dilli Rozi Roti Adhikar Abhiyaan)

## Annexure 1- problems in implementation of the National Food Security Act in Delhi

- 1. Many people belonging to 'geographically, socially and occupationally vulnerable groups' (homeless, transgender, handicapped) as defined in the guidelines issued by the Delhi government, are not being able to secure ration cards (food security cards) due to procedural difficulties like requiring ID proof, address proof etc.-** As per the guidelines issued by the Delhi government, transgenders and homeless (shelterless) have been identified as geographically, socially and occupationally vulnerable groups. However, no proper procedure has been put in place to facilitate people belonging to these categories in applying for benefits under the NFSA. As a result, despite being recognised as the most vulnerable and in need for food security, they have been left outside the purview of the Act.

Transgenders live in community settlements called 'Deras'. They do not have residence proof and often do not even have proper proof of legal identity and name as they change their name and are known by their female name. One of the groups as part of the abhiyaan, assisted transgenders in filling up applications for food security cards, however, the department has refused to accept these applications, citing lack of proper address proof and documents related to legal identity. Further, as often 50-100 transgenders live together in a 'Dera', but do not identify themselves as a 'household', the department is refusing to issue multiple food security cards for the same address for each individual.

Similarly, the homeless (shelterless) are also facing problems even though the guidelines clarify in point 9 that no proof of residence shall be required of the homeless.

**We request you to put in place a simplified procedure to ensure that these most vulnerable categories are not left out of the purview of the NFSA due to lack of documents like proof of residence and identity. Self-certification by vulnerable categories should be accepted as proof. Further, as there are no 'households' in the case of transgenders, each individual person must be issued their own food security card even if they have the same address.**

- 2. Despite repeated Supreme Court orders, Aadhaar continues to be illegally made mandatory by the Delhi government for getting entitlements under the NFSA, resulting in a very large number of poor across Delhi being denied their subsidised food grains and other benefits-** Aadhaar has been illegally made mandatory for applying for a food security card- The guidelines issued by the Delhi government titled, "Guidelines for identification of eligible households to receive food grains at subsidized prices under 'National Food Security Ordinance 2013'" and the application form issued by the department for applying for National Food Security Card (ration card), make it mandatory for applicants to provide copies of their Aadhaar card or UID number. This requirement is in violation of the directions of the Supreme Court, which has repeatedly held that Aadhaar cannot be a pre-condition for receiving entitlements/benefits. On August 11, 2015 in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 494 of 2012, the SC ordered that:  
*"1. The Union of India shall give wide publicity in the electronic and print media including radio and television networks that it is not mandatory for a citizen to obtain an Aadhaar card;*  
*2. The production of an Aadhaar card will not be condition for obtaining any benefits otherwise due to a citizen;*  
*3. The Unique Identification Number or the Aadhaar card will not be used by the respondents for any purpose other than the PDS Scheme and in particular for the purpose of distribution of*

*foodgrains, etc. and cooking fuel, such as kerosene. The Aadhaar card may also be used for the purpose of the LPG Distribution Scheme;*

*4. The information about an individual obtained by the Unique Identification Authority of India while issuing an Aadhaar card shall not be used for any other purpose, save as above, except as may be directed by a Court for the purpose of criminal investigation."*

The guidelines and application form issued by the Delhi government are clearly in violation of point 2 of the above mentioned orders of the Supreme Court. Denying people their food grain entitlement under NFSA because they have not enrolled for Aadhaar or making Aadhaar a pre-condition for applying for a food security card is patently illegal in light of the SC's directions. Clearly, the only concession made by the court is to allow the government to use the data, that has already been collected or where people are voluntarily, with informed consent, enrolling for Aadhaar, for food grain distribution under the PDS and for LPG distribution. The orders don't allow the government to make Aadhaar mandatory or a pre-condition for availing rights/entitlements from the government.

Similarly, on the 24th of March 2014, in Crl No(s).2524/2014, the SC held that: *"More so, no person shall be deprived of any service for want of Aadhaar number in case he/she is otherwise eligible/entitled. All the authorities are directed to modify their forms/circulars/likes so as to not compulsorily require the Aadhaar number in order to meet the requirement of the interim order passed by this Court forthwith."*

As evidenced in the public hearing, people across the state are being denied their entitlements under the NFSA as they do not possess Aadhaar card or UID number. Further, due to this requirement young children are being left outside the purview of the NFSA as biometrics required for Aadhaar can only be captured for children above 5 years of age. The provisions of the guidelines and the application form are in fact, grounds for contempt of court as the department should have modified the guidelines in compliance with the directions of the Supreme Court.

We had written to Shri S. S. Yadav, Secretary-cum-Commissioner, Department of Food and Civil Supplies, Government of NCT of Delhi on the 16<sup>th</sup> of February 2015, highlighting this issue and requesting him to immediately modify the guidelines and also requesting for a meeting with him. However, it appears that the Secretary-cum-Commissioner has not taken any corrective measure, despite the fact that the guidelines are in violation of the Supreme Court orders. **We request you to immediately modify the guidelines and the application form and ensure that in compliance with the Supreme Court orders, Aadhaar or UID number is not made mandatory for accessing rights and entitlements under the NFSA.**

- 3. Scores of poor and marginalised families are being left out of the NFSA due to the exclusion criteria defined by the Delhi government guidelines which state that households which have an electricity connection above 2 KW or households owning building/land in 'E' category colonies in Delhi are not eligible for entitlements under NFSA-** the guidelines issued by the Delhi government for identifying beneficiaries under the NFSA contain arbitrary exclusions which are resulting in scores of poor and marginalised being rendered ineligible for accessing food grains under the NFSA. The criteria defined by the government stating that households which have an electricity connection above 2 KW will be excluded from the NFSA is unnecessarily penalising families for matters over which they have no control and which are unrelated to ration. People living on rent in slums have no control over wattage of the electricity meter supplying electricity

to their rooms, as that is decided by the owner of the dwelling. Further as demarcated floors are not recognised in slums, often a single large electricity connection may be serving several households and therefore is more than 2 KW. When electricity was privatised and the private companies installed meters in slums, people were not informed and nor was their informed consent sought for deciding the wattage of electricity connection. In several cases, it has also emerged that in spite of people approaching the electricity company to change the electricity connection, their requests have not been acted upon. The wattage of the electricity connection has no correlation with the health status or level of deprivation and hunger suffered by a family. Similarly, the exclusion of households owning building/land in 'E' category colonies in Delhi, is also leading to the poor and marginalised in need for food grains, especially widows, women headed households or families with handicapped members, being left out of the ambit of the NFSA. Many of these families earlier had BPL or AAY cards and were dependent on their monthly food entitlements and own/ live in small one room dwellings in 'E' category colonies.

**We request you to kindly review and appropriately amend the guidelines to ensure that the poor and marginalised are not left outside the ambit of the NFSA due to arbitrarily defined exclusion criteria. The exclusion criteria of wattage of electricity connection must not be applicable for residents of slums. Eligibility of households living in 'E' colony must be decided on a case to case basis rather than a blanket exclusion.**

4. **Extremely poor quality of ration being supplied and irregularities in quantity of grains being provided in various circles under the NFSA-** In the public hearing, it emerged that in many circles extremely poor quality ration is being provided, which cannot even be consumed by people. Several people had brought samples of the dirty and poor quality of grains (attached as annexure 3). People also testified about irregularities in quantity of grains being distributed under NFSA. Even where the problem of poor quality grains was brought to the attention of the Department, no action was taken on those complaints. In most FPS in Delhi, samples of food grains are not displayed in violation of the provisions of the PDS Control Order.

**We request you to review the mechanisms put in place to check the quality and quantity of grains supplied under PDS and ensure that they are appropriately amended to address the issue. Further, complaints related to these matters must be dealt with in an appropriate and time-bound manner and wherever FPS owners are found to be illegally selling inferior quality grain, stringent legal action must be initiated against them.**

5. **Ineffective and lack of time-bound grievance redress mechanism for resolving complaints related to NFSA resulting in complaints regarding accessing ration entitlements lying unaddressed for several months-** As per order dated 30-1-2014 (ref F3 (40)/2013/F&S/P&C/Vol-III/96-105), Additional District Magistrates (ADMs) have been designated as District Grievance Redressal Officers (DGROs) under section 15 of the NFSA. At the public hearing various groups which are part of the campaign testified that despite having filed almost 1000 complaints with the concerned ADMs, more than 90% of the complaints continue to remain unaddressed and unacknowledged by the Department.

There are several lacunae in the grievance redress mechanism set up by the Delhi government under the NFSA. Firstly, there is no publicity given to the fact that ADMs have been designated as DGRO's under the NFSA. There are no boards at the circle offices of the food department or at the ration shops indicating that complaints related to NFSA should be filed with the ADM. Further, even

in the offices of ADMs there is no indication of the fact that the ADM is the DGRO and there is no explanation of the process of filing a complaint. Members of the abhiyaan have filed complaints with ADM North-West, North, South-West and South and none of the ADMs were in fact even aware that they were the designated DGROs under the NFSA and turned away people who had come with their complaints. It is only when the order referred above, which was accessed under the RTI Act, was shown to them that they even realised that they are DGROs under the law. Further, as there was no information available in the public domain about the areas under the jurisdiction of the designated DGROs, more than 50 people from resettlement colony in Bawana were shunted between ADM north-west and north as each said that Bawana was not under their jurisdiction. In fact, even though the complaints were drafted in April, they were finally accepted by the government only in July. Further, the order referred above states that the ADM must provide a unique identity number for each complaint. However, apart from some complaints filed with ADM South, none of the other ADMs provided unique identity numbers for complaints. ADM South West, did not provide any kind of acknowledgement for the complaints filed while the ADM of North West provided one common diary number for more than 40 complaints. Even more concerning, there has been no action on any complaints filed with the ADM. No hearings have been held for any of the complaints and no communication has been sent to the complainants. This shows that the grievance redress mechanism is a complete failure and needs to be urgently re-structured to ensure time-bound and effective redress of peoples' grievances. The DGRO has been given complete discretion in deciding whether or not to enquire into a complaint as point 3 of the above mentioned order states,

*"3. On receipt of complaint, and if satisfied that the matter needs to be enquired into, the District Grievance Redressal Officer (DGRO) may summon the complainant, owner of FPS and concerned FSI/FSO/Zonal Assistant Commissioner, F&S and may hear the parties for arriving at a decision as to whether there is any dereliction on the part of owner of FPS/Licensee concerned"* (emphasis added).

This implies that the ADM can using his/her own discretion to reject every single complaint that is received by them. Further, there is no clear procedure and time-frame defined in the order issued by the Department within which a complaint has to be disposed. While point 2 of the order mentioned above states that the DGRO will forward the complaint to the Zonal AC for comments and action taken and that the AC must furnish a reply to the DGRO within seven working days, however the order fails to mention the number of days within which the DGRO must forward the complaint to the AC. Further, the order does not mention that a copy of the comments received from the Zonal AC must be provided to the complainant. In fact, the order even fails to mention that if the DGRO decides to close the complaint, it must inform the complainant or give the complainant an opportunity to be heard. People have been unable to proceed with their complaints as the language used in point 6 of the above order suggests that an appeal can be filed only after the DGRO has passed its orders. Also, no time-frame has been prescribed within which the state food commission has to dispose the appeal. This order, which was issued under your previous government in Delhi, goes against every basic tenet of an effective grievance redress framework.

We also want to bring to your notice that the help-line started by the department '1967', is usually not answered by any person and a pre-recorded message is played repeatedly. Further, no unique complaint number is provided and the people answering the help line refuse to record grievances/complaints if they pertain to the previous month.

We believe that the grievance redress mechanism must provide a time-bound mechanism clearly defining the time-frame within which the DGRO has to dispose the complaint from the date of receipt of the complaint. A similar time-frame must also be laid down for disposal of appeals. Further, there must be a mandatory hearing in every case as most of the beneficiaries under the NFSA come from the poorest and most marginalised sections of society and may not be able to file

detailed written representations regarding their grievances. Therefore, to ensure accessibility of the grievance redress mechanism, the DGRO must give an opportunity of hearing to the complainant. Further, under no circumstances should the DGRO be empowered to close a complaint without giving an opportunity of being heard to the complainant. The orders must also state that every complaint should be disposed by the DGRO by giving a written order, a copy of which must be provided to the complainant. The process of appeal must not be made contingent on receiving the order of the DGRO. If within the specified time-frame a complainant does not receive an order, the complainant should be free to prefer an appeal against the lack of redressal of their complaint. The grievance redress mechanism must also be widely publicized through mass media, boards at ration shops and offices, helplines etc. to ensure that people are aware of the process. Help-desks/ information and facilitation centres should be set up to ensure that people are assisted in the process of writing and filing their complaints. **We request you to immediately put in place a time-bound and effective mechanism for redressing peoples' complaints. If required, the Abhiyaan could put together a detailed note on strengthening the grievance redress mechanism.**

6. **Roll back of transparency measures in Delhi related to PDS in violation of the NFSA 2013 and the RTI Act 2005 - including stopping SMS service whereby people used to be informed about the date of delivery of ration to their FPS, non implementation of weekly public audit of ration records, no mechanisms being put in place to operationalise social audits as mandated by NFS Act, lack of proactive disclosure of relevant information outside the ration shops and circle offices and non display of samples of grains outside Fair Price Shops-** While it is commendable that the department has launched a website <http://nfs.delhi.gov.in/> which gives important information related to the NFSA, we are extremely concerned to note that the department has discontinued its initiative of sending out SMS alerts to cardholders informing them of the date of arrival of food grains at their ration shops. This initiative helped people monitor the delivery of their entitlement and challenge misinformation often propagated by the ration shopkeeper that the ration has not arrived at the shop in a bid to deny people their rightful entitlements. However, it appears that this SMS service has been discontinued as people have not received any SMSes since February 2015. This was an important element of transparency especially as most beneficiaries of NFSA do not have the necessary means to access websites on the internet to check the provision of ration entitlements in their FPS. We request you to kindly immediately order the re-instatement of this SMS service to ensure transparency in the functioning of the NFSA.

Further, the mechanism of public audit of records of ration shops is also not functioning across the state. Most circle officers are not aware of this mechanism and therefore, do not maintain the requisite record and provide them for inspection on the designated days. This is also a violation of Section 27 of the NFSA which states, *"All Targeted Public Distribution System related records shall be placed in the public domain and kept open for inspection to the public, in such manner as may be prescribed by the State Government."* We request you to direct the department to ensure that this system is also implemented properly and that wide publicity is given to this provision of public audit of records. In addition, we request you to kindly evolve a mechanism by which all the records are put in the public domain from where people can freely access them, such as through the internet, or through information centres, which are outside the jurisdiction of the department. Further, as per Section 28 of the Act, periodic social audits on the functioning of fair price shops and the Targeted Public Distribution System must be organised. To our knowledge, the government has not put in place any mechanism to comply with this requirement of periodic social audits.

As the government has issued smart cards in lieu of the ration cards and the point of sale devices have not yet been provided in ration shops, beneficiaries purchasing grains under the NFSA are not provided any proof of sale. Earlier, the ration card had space where the shopkeeper was required

to make an entry every month about the amount and price of commodities supplied to each person every month.

We also want to bring to your notice that in a lot of ration shops across Delhi, the ration shopkeepers are not recording the signatures of ration cardholders in the sale register. As you would know, one of the ways in which people have been able to combat corruption in PDS is to compare entries made in the sale register with those recorded in the ration cards and stock registers. Often, corruption has been proven as signatures were found to have been forged by the ration shop keeper in a bid to divert food grains.

In violation of the NFS Act, RTI Act, the PDS Control Order and various directions of the court, relevant information about the functioning of the PDS- like the list of beneficiaries, quantify and price of grains- is not being displayed outside the ration shops and circle offices. Photographs taken during an audit of ration shops showing this lack of transparency are enclosed as Annexure 4. Further, none of the more than 50 ration shops audited by various groups and people participating in the public hearing, displayed the samples of grains outside Fair Price Shops. Despite such gross violations, the FSOs and inspectors of circle offices fail to check these illegalities and allow the FPS dealers to function with impunity.

**We request you to issue appropriate directions to ensure that a proper authenticated record indicating the quantity and price of commodities is provided to each person purchasing grains from the ration shops. We also request you to direct the department to ensure that signatures are recorded in the sale register for every sale made at the ration shop. The SMS service informing beneficiaries about the status of food grains and the weekly public audit of all the records of the FPS must be revived and widely publicised. The system of period social audits as per section 28 of the Act must also be immediately operationalised. Further, we request you to kindly set up a taskforce to undertake audits to enforce compliance with requirements of proactive disclosures at the circle offices and fair price shops.**

- 7. A large number of families are not getting ration as they have not received their new ration cards, even though the NFSA website shows that their card has been approved and that their ration supplies are being sent to the shop-** At the public hearing several families testified that despite the NFSA website showing that their card has been approved and that their ration supplies are being sent to the shop, they are being denied their monthly entitlements as their physical ration card has not reached them. In fact this problem is quite widespread and we believe is also leading to large scale diversion and pilferage of grains as despite the online system showing that people's grain has been sent to the shop, they are not receiving their entitlements. A fact-finding undertaken by the abhiyaan showed that in Bhalswa Dairy, hundreds of ration cards were discovered at the house of the post man who was hoarding them and extorting money from people in order to deliver them their card, thereby denying scores of families their food entitlements. Further, a visit to the circle office by the fact finding team unearthed hundreds of ration cards lying strewn on the floor in the ration office for more than 4 months as these had allegedly been returned by the post office stating the addresses of the cardholders could not be found. Shockingly, the department had not made any efforts to track down the cardholders and was simply storing them in the circle office. A press release issued by the fact-finding team in enclosed as annexure 5.

**We request you to immediately put in place a mechanism to inform people that their ration cards have been approved and to ensure that their cards are delivered to them. Perhaps cardholders could be informed via sms or phone calls or field officers of the Department could**



be tasked with ensuring that cards that are returned by the post office are followed up on and not simply left unattended. In addition, the circle offices and FPS should display the list of ration cards approved and also a list of those returned by the post office to enable people to get proper information about the status of their ration cards and take action accordingly. Further, instructions must also be issued that wherever ration cards have been approved, people must not be denied ration entitlements simply because they do not have the physical card with them.

8. **Distance from Ration shop-** In the public hearing, it emerged that in many places, peoples' ration cards have been attached to FPSs which are located at a considerable distance, often up to 10 kms, from their place of residence. This makes it difficult and economically unviable for people to access their entitlements under NFSA.

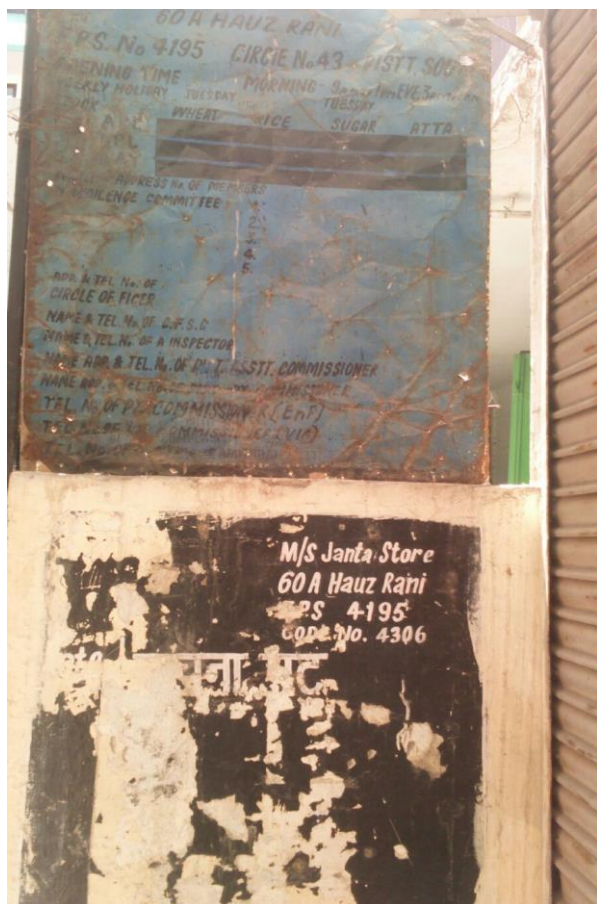
**We request you to look into this matter and ensure that ration cards are attached to FPS located close to peoples' place of residence.**

9. **Mechanism for ongoing monitoring of implementation of NFSA-** As the implementation of the NFSA requires coordination between different departments including the Food Department, Women and Child Welfare department etc., and as enumerated above that there are several problems in the implementation of the NFSA in Delhi, **we urge you to set up a system of ongoing monitoring of the NFSA.** The mechanism must also have provisions for interfacing with the public on a continuous basis to understand the problems being faced by people and then address those by bridging the gap between the government's policies and the situation on the ground.

Annexure 3- Photographs of samples of dirty and poor quality of grains



Annexure 4- Photographs taken during an audit of ration shops showing lack of transparency at FPSs



**Annexure 5**  
**Delhi Rozi Roti Adhikar Abhiyan**

26th August 2015

Press Release

Today Delhi Rozi Roti Adhikar Abhiyan held a meeting at Bhalaswa JJ Colony in North West Delhi to understand the key issues faced by local residents in accessing their food grains under the National Food Security Act.

During the meeting the key issues that emerged were:

**1. Widespread corruption in distribution of new ration cards-** It emerged that in January-February 2015 sacks full of more than 500 new ration cards were recovered from the house of the postman who was supposed to deliver them. The postman was hoarding them and demanding bribes from people in exchange for delivering their ration cards to them.

When members of the Abhiyan visited the local Food Supply Office they found more than fifteen plastic packets (thelas) full of new ration cards, strewn on the floor, which the department officials claimed were cards that had been returned by the post office as the cardholders could not be found. Some of the envelopes containing new ration cards were dated as far back as March and April of 2015. Apart from storing the ration cards it appeared that the department had not made any efforts to track the ration cardholders and deliver the cards to them, despite the fact that the mobile numbers of the ration cardholders were mentioned in the letters. The Abhiyan could track down several beneficiaries and confirmed that the name and address mentioned on the envelope was correct by making on the spot phone calls to the numbers listed on the envelopes.

The list of beneficiaries of NFSA was not displayed at the Circle office in violation of the provisions of NFSA, PDS Control Order and Section 4 of the RTI Act. Further, it emerged that the local ration shop dealer has been collecting filled out ration card forms and demanding bribes claiming that he will get people's new ration cards made.

The corrupt practices of the postmen and the lackadaisical attitude of the department has resulted in thousands of people being denied their Right to Food.

**2. New ration cards not being distributed as a result people denied basic rights-** Scores of people stated that they had applied for ration cards and had the requisite acknowledgment slips, but had not, till date, received their new ration cards. As a result, the ration shop had stopped supplying them their food grains even though the official government website shows that the food grains meant for these people was in fact being sent every month to the ration shop. This points to possible corruption and pilferage of grains meant for the poorest of the poor as the grain is not reaching the intended beneficiary.

In several cases, people had applied for the new ration cards in 2013 and 2014, and while the online system showed that their cards had been approved, for the last two years they had not received the cards and therefore the food grains.

**3. Names of all family members not being added to new ration card-** It emerged that in several cases where new ration cards had been issued, the names of all family members had not been added even though all the requisite documents had been submitted. The result has been that families are facing a shortage of food as under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) food grains are an individual entitlement.

**4. Distance from ration shop-** People reported that despite the availability of a neighbourhood ration shop, their cards had been linked to ration shops more than 5-7 km away. This forced people to spend almost hundred rupees per trip in order to access their rations.

The Abhiyan demands that the Delhi Government immediately put in place a transparent and accountable mechanism of delivering new ration cards to people so that the widespread corruption in delivery of cards can be addressed. Details of all beneficiaries and list of ration card applications that are approved must be displayed on the department's website and at all the Circle offices in compliance with the NFSA, PDS Control Order and RTI Act. The details of all ration cards that are returned because the addresses could allegedly not be found must be proactively made available on the department website and at all circle offices to enable people to check if their cards have been returned. Further, the practice of denying people their ration supplies because they do not have the new ration card must immediately be stopped. The government must give wide publicity through boards outside every shop stating that denial of ration supplies for want of a new card is illegal and will be penalised.

The Abhiyan had written to the Delhi Government in February and May 2015 regarding various issues plaguing the implementation of the NFSA including non-functioning of the grievance redress mechanism, aadhaar being made mandatory in violation of SC orders, rollback of transparency measures etc. There has been no response from the government on any of the issues highlighted in the representations made. The letters sent to the Delhi Government are enclosed.

To highlight the various problems faced by people in accessing food under the NFSA, a delhi-wide public hearing is being organised by the Abhiyan in September 2015. Details regarding the same will be circulated closer to the date.

Annie Raja, Dipa Sinha, Anjali Bhardwaj, Koninika Ray, Amrita Johri, Shabina and Praavita Kashyap

(On behalf of the Delhi Rozi Roti Adhikar Abhiyan)

For further information, please contact- 9650434777, 9810273984