E-Government

Gujarat, Haryana to replace ration cards with UID-compliant smart cards

By Anshupriya Jha | 29 June 2011 | Views: 608

The State governments in Gujarat and Haryana have decided to replace ration cards allocated under the Public Distribution System (PDS) with smart cards to ensure transparency and ward off complaints of any anomalies.

In Haryana, the leg work to make such cards started May 27 onwards in four blocks on a pilot basis in four districts of Ambala, Sonepat, Sirsa and Gharaunda. A total of 54 lakh families would be covered under the scheme. The Centre has allocated more than Rs.137.6 crore for the first phase of the project in the State.

Gujarat has also launched the process of making biometric ration cards on a pilot basis. Speaking to FutureGov, Ravi Saxena, Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Gujarat, said this would benefit 1.5 crore Above Poverty Line (APL) and Below Poverty Line (BPL) people out of a total population of 6 crore in the State. He added that details thus furnished would also be linked with godowns across the State via a virtual private network. Multi-protocol Label Switching (MTLS) would make sure nodes are created everywhere in the system which would help the government keep a tab on the movement of foodgrain from the godowns to the end user.

The beneficiary needs to fill a two-page form – the first page needs information related to UID and the second page to that of the ration card.

These smart cards would be compliant to Unique Identification Card (UIC) and would eventually be integrated into the same. The details and biometrics of all ration card holders would be recorded for preparing these cards.

The system would be location agnostic and would address issues such as high incidences of mobility among people in search of livelihood as people would be able to avail themselves of

this facility across the State. The beneficiary would have to insert the smart card in a machine in the fair-price shop which would inform him/her about the quantity of ration allotted and its price. Accordingly, the depot holder would the give ration to the person.

The machine will match the fingerprints of the person to eliminate duplication and fraud. It would also minimize the possibility of black marketers and hoarders.