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# Government admits to pilferage in Anna Bhagya scheme

## As many as 691 cases booked, but no action taken till date

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BENGALURU, DHNS

Thousands of quintals of rice worth ten of lakhs of rupees under the flagship Anna Bhagya scheme have been pilfered since 2013, when it was launched. The government has booked as many as 691 cases in this regard, Food and Civil Supplies K Gopalaiiah told the Legislative Assembly on Friday.

The minister was replying to a question by Bijapur City MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal who sought to know whether it had come to the notice of the government that the Anna Bhag-

ya scheme was being misused. Albeit cases being registered, no action has been taken against the accused till date, Yatnal added.

Under Anna Bhagya, 7 kg of rice is provided free to every member of a BPL household.

In response, Gopalaiiah said he had directed the officials to take action and penalise people who were involved in this racket. Further, to curb the misuse, the government had linked all the beneficiaries and their ration cards to Aadhaar cards. The grains were directly provided to beneficiaries through



According to the state government, 154 cases were identified in 2019 alone and 11,534 quintals of pilfered Anna Bhagya rice was seized. DH FILE PHOTO

biometrics and the billing system in fair price shops had gone online, Gopalaiiah said.

According to the data provided by the government, in 2019 alone, 154 cases were identified and 11,534 quintals of pilfered rice was seized,

while in 2018, there were 171 cases and 11,216 quintals rice seized.

Also, Yatnal demanded that the government distribute ragi and jowar under the scheme, for the benefit of people in old Mysuru and north Karnataka

regions where these grains are preferred over rice. Weighing in on this, Leader of Opposition Siddaramaiah, who launched the scheme when he was chief minister, said during his tenure, the government experimented with jowar and ragi, but people preferred rice to be distributed through the scheme.

Siddaramaiah also requested the government to not reduce the quantity of grains being given under the Anna Bhagya. Apparently, the government is considering reducing the quantum of free rice from 7 kg to 5 kg.

Further, Congress leader Shivananda Patil urged the government to take urgent measures to ensure that the tur dal going waste in godowns was put to use. "Tur dal produce procured over three years has remained in godowns," he pointed out.