

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1627
TO BE ANSWERED ON 6TH AUGUST, 2024

FORTIFICATION OF RICE

1627 SMT. RANJEET RANJAN:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether all rice grains distributed under the Public Distribution System are fortified, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (b) whether Government has undertaken any studies or assessments to evaluate the potential health risks associated with the consumption of fortified rice;
- (c) if so, the details thereof, including the recommendations and findings and if not, the reasons for not conducting such studies of potential health risks from fortified rice; and
- (d) what other measures are being implemented to ensure that surplus grains are effectively utilised to alleviate food insecurity?

A N S W E R

MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS,
FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRIMATI NIMUBEN JAYANTIBHAI BAMBHANIYA)

(a): Government of India is supplying fortified rice throughout the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) Scheme, and Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme and in Other Welfare Schemes (OWS) in all States and Union Territories (UTs). Custom-milled rice has been replaced with fortified rice in every scheme of the Government and 100% coverage of distribution of fortified rice has been achieved by March, 2024.

(b) & (c): NITI Aayog has constituted a Core Committee to monitor the impact evaluation of the Rice Fortification Initiative. NITI Aayog and ICMR-NIN have taken up study in six districts in different regions of the country to evaluate the impact of iron-fortified rice supplied through the Public Distribution System (PDS) in India.

In addition, ICMR-NIN, Hyderabad also conducted a review of literature and found that there is limited evidence of transient adverse effects among participants consuming iron fortified rice. Another notable finding is that considering the level of iron fortification in rice in India, the total iron intake through fortified rice is less than 0.59 mg/kg/day for any age group, which is well within the normal daily iron requirement.

(d): The Government of India has implemented various schemes to alleviate food insecurity, including the distribution of food grains under PMGKAY (Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojna), ICDS and PM-POSHAN scheme.

In addition, the government sells surplus food grains, beyond the PDS requirements, through e-auctions. This helps increase the availability of food grains in the market, control inflation, ensure food security, and make food grains more affordable to the general population.

These measures collectively help address food insecurity and malnutrition across the country.
