

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2752
TO BE ANSWERED ON 25TH MARCH, 2025

INTEGRATION OF AI AND IOT INTO PDS SHOPS

2752 SHRI KARTIKEYA SHARMA:

Will the Minister of *Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution* be pleased to state:

- (a) the initiatives undertaken to integrate Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT) into Public Distribution System (PDS) shops and warehousing to improve efficiency in distribution and storage, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether there are any pilot projects currently underway for the same, if so, the details of their scope, timelines, and expected outcomes; and
- (c) the status of infrastructural readiness and resources required for complete AI implementation in PDS system, including training of personnel etc. across the country, if so, the details thereof?

A N S W E R
MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS,
FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRIMATI NIMUBEN JAYANTIBHAI BAMBHANIYA)

(a) to (c): At present there is no proposal under consideration of the Department to integrate Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Internet of Things (IoT) into Public Distribution System (PDS).

However, the Department is implementing the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) "Scheme for Modernization and Reforms through Technology in Public Distribution System (SMART-PDS)" for the development and implementation of advanced integrated supply chain software in States/UTs. At present, the SMART-PDS is in development phase. The project was started by NIC from October 2024 and the application is expected to be launched in phases from April 2025 onwards.

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The SMART-PDS scheme envisages to strengthen the technology infrastructure in Public Distribution System (PDS) in order to enable technology driven reforms and transformative changes in the entire PDS ecosystem covering NFSA and State schemes. It overcomes the state level technological limitations of PDS operations in all States/UTs in respect of IT Hardware, Software and institutionalizes an integrated unified advanced Central System application covering all PDS related operations across all States/UTs.

Further, the department has also leveraged advanced data analytics of PDS Systems which have enabled intelligent analysis of deep anomalies & detection of underlying discrepancies in issuance & management of ration cards. The States are then assisted by such analytics to enable them for better targeting of beneficiaries and improving efficiencies of their PDS operations.
