

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2248
TO BE ANSWERED ON 08/08/2025

DECLINE IN RICE PRODUCTION IN WEST BENGAL

2248. SHRI SAMIK BHATTACHARYA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware of the fact that West Bengal dropped from being the largest producer of rice in India to third-largest, if so, the primary reasons identified for the same;
- (b) whether Government has assessed the challenges faced by rice farmers in West Bengal, such as declining soil fertility and access to quality seeds and fertilizers;
- (c) measures being undertaken to support rice farmers in West Bengal to address these challenges and enhance rice production; and
- (d) whether Government is collaborating with agricultural research institutions to develop and disseminate technologies and practices aimed at increasing rice-yield and sustainability in West Bengal?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
(SHRI RAMNATH THAKUR)

(a): The production of rice in West Bengal has been steadily increasing from 154.84 lakh tonnes in 2022-23 to 156.87 lakh tonnes in 2023-24 and 164.91 lakh tonnes in 2024-25(as per 3rd Advance Estimate). However, during this period, the States of Uttar Pradesh and Telangana have recorded comparatively higher increase in rice production, primarily due to greater area expansion, resulting in West Bengal becoming the third-largest rice-producing state in the country.

(b) to (d): To support rice farmers in West Bengal and address challenges such as soil health, and access to quality seeds and fertilizers, multiple initiatives are being undertaken.

In order to ensure timely availability of Seeds, DA&FW organizes the Zonal Seeds Review Meetings with State Department of Agriculture, State Seed Corporations including National Seeds Corporation Ltd., National Level Seed Producing Agencies, and ICAR etc. prior to each sowing seasons i.e. Kharif and Rabi season to review the requirement and availability of certified /quality seeds, crop and State-wise. As reported by the States, sufficient quantities of certified/quality of paddy seeds were available in the State of West Bengal. The details of requirement and availability of certified/quality of paddy seeds during last two year and current Kharif -2025 in the State of West Bengal are as under.

Quantity of Seeds (in Lakh Qtls.)

S.No.	Year	Requirement	Availability	Surplus Status
1.	2023-24	11.668	14.458	2.790
2.	2024-25	11.932	14.774	2.842
3.	Current Kharif -2025	7.885	8.020	0.135

Further, under Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCSP) and Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) projects, the ICAR-Central Rice Research Institute (CRRI), Cuttack has distributed 10 tonnes of climate-resilient and high-yielding rice varieties, benefiting around 700 farmers in Coochbehar. Additionally, 3 tonnes of rice seeds of varieties CR Dhan 312 (non-lodging type, tolerant to moderate wind and rain at maturity) and CR Dhan 801 (tolerant to submergence and drought) were distributed to around 150 farmers in Burdwan and Hooghly districts for both mechanized direct-seeded and transplanted rice cultivation. In Bankura and Purulia, 15 tonnes of improved rice seeds were distributed to about 1,000 farmers. These included climate-resilient varieties such as: CR Dhan 807 (herbicide and drought tolerant), CR Dhan 804 (submergence and drought tolerant), CR Dhan 214 (suitable for aerobic conditions), CR Dhan 320 (early maturing and high yielding), and CR Dhan 312 (non-lodging, tolerant to wind and rain). Breeder seeds were also distributed to promote local seed chain development. Demonstrations of salinity-tolerant and climate-resilient varieties (0.7 tonnes) were conducted in South 24 Parganas.

The Government is also collaborating with State agricultural research stations, such as: Rice Research Station, Chinsurah (Hooghly) and Field Crop Research Station, Burdwan, in partnership with ICAR-CRRI. These stations were provided breeder seeds of selected varieties (CR Dhan 320, 321, and 312) based on extensive state-level trials. With support from ICAR-CISH, Malda, the variety CR Dhan 320 was demonstrated on 3,000 acres across various districts in West Bengal.

The Government is promoting Integrated Nutrient Management (INM) for balanced and judicious use of chemical fertilizers, bio-fertilizers and locally available organic manures like farmyard manure, compost, vermi compost and green manure based on soil testing to maintain soil health and productivity. The Government has fixed the statutory MRP of urea on 01.03.2018 at ₹ 242/45 Kg bag and 5% extra charge is for Neem coating and 5% charge is of GST. The MRP of Neem coated Urea at farm gate level is Rs 266/ 45 kg bag.

Furthermore, the Government is implementing the National Food Security and Nutrition Mission (NFSNM) across 28 States and 2 Union Territories, including West Bengal, with the objective of enhancing the production of rice, wheat, and pulses through area expansion and productivity improvement. The Mission also focuses on restoring soil fertility and productivity and enhancing farm-level income. Under NFSM, assistance is provided for various interventions such as cluster demonstrations on improved packages of practices, demonstrations on cropping systems, distribution of high-yielding and hybrid seeds, promotion of improved farm machinery and resource conservation tools, support for efficient water application technologies, plant protection measures, nutrient management and soil ameliorants, provision of processing and post-harvest equipment, and cropping system-based training programs for farmers etc.
