

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

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 185
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10TH MARCH, 2026

INFRASTRUCTURE MODERNISATION FOR FOODGRAINS STORAGE AND DISTRIBUTION

185 # SHRI AMAR PAL MAURYA:

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

- (a): the steps taken by the Ministry to modernise foodgrains distribution, storage and logistics systems;
- (b): whether the Ministry has taken measures to strengthen procurement systems and ensure timely payments of MSP to farmers;
- (c): if so, the details thereof; and
- (d): the steps planned to be taken to expand and improve foodgrain storage, so that foodgrain is not wasted and could adequately reach all eligible households?

A N S W E R
MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTRY
OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY
(SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF STARRED QUESTION NO. 185 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 10.03.2026 IN THE RAJYA SABHA.

(a): Department of Food and Public Distribution has taken following initiatives to **modernize Public Distribution System Operations**: -

SMART-PDS: The Department of Food and Public Distribution is implementing the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) “Scheme for Modernization and Reforms through Technology in Public Distribution System (SMART-PDS)” for development of an advanced, integrated and modular digital platform to strengthen end-to-end management of the Public Distribution System (PDS), including ration card management, supply chain operations, allocation, procurement and biometric distribution.

The SMART-PDS application is being developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC). The development of the platform commenced in October 2024, and the modules are being rolled out in phases from April 2025 onwards across States/UTs.

Smart Warehouse Project : The Government is converting its 150 FCI owned Depots to smart warehouses on pilot basis. CWC has installed smart warehouse at all its foodgrain warehouses. Under this project, traditional depots are being converted in smart warehouses which are equipped with different IoT sensors like smoke sensors, fire sensors & gate opening sensor etc. for monitoring key parameters such as CO₂, phosphine levels, fire hazards, humidity, unauthorized entry and temperature on real time basis.

This initiative is to ensure real-time visibility, timely intervention, data-driven decision-making & standardized operations across all depots contributing to ensure safe, secure, and efficient food grain storage and distribution.

Depot Darpan Portal: Depot Darpan Portal is a digital platform launched by DFPD to enhance the monitoring, transparency and efficiency of food-grain storage depots & warehouses under PDS.

Key features and purpose of Depot Darpan:

- a. Depot/warehouse managers upload geo-tagged data regarding infrastructure, operations, and financial performance of the depot.
- b. Portal uses a composite scoring system, assessing depots on two broad categories: infrastructure (safety, storage conditions, technology use, compliance) and operational parameters (stock turnover, losses, space utilisation, manpower costs etc.).
- c. Based on the scores, each depot receives a star rating, which is meant to provide a quick assessment of depot performance.
- d. Validation of data is built into the process via 100% supervisory officer verification and some random third-party audits to ensure reliability.

Silos-Scientific Storage of Foodgrains: Silo storage represents a highly mechanized and modern method of bulk foodgrains storage, ensuring superior preservation and enhanced shelf life. It requires only one-third of the land area compared to conventional storage methods, lowers transit

and overhead costs such as those associated with gunny bags, reduces manpower requirements, and ensures consistent quality through scientific handling and storage practices. 32LMT of Silos are currently functional.

Anna Chakra" Route optimization tool:- DFPD has launched the optimisation tool "Anna Chakra" for Public Distribution Supply (PDS) Chain on 05.12.2024. This tool makes food safety nets more efficient, contributing to reduced carbon emissions, savings, and efficiency in reaching the beneficiaries of a scheme that serves 81 crore vulnerable people.

PDS Supply Chain Optimisation programme started in March 2023 and covers the routes transporting 680 LMT of food annually through PDS.

Under this exercise, mapping of FCI warehouses to State warehouses (L1 level transport), state warehouse to FPS shops (L2 level transport), based on optimized results is done.

CCTV and IoT technologies:- Modern CCTV cameras are being installed in all FCI owned and CWC depots.

These technologies transform depot operations by ensuring:-

- I. Real-time visibility
- II. Timely intervention
- III. Data-driven decision-making
- IV. Standardized operations across all depots

(b) & (c): The steps taken by the Government to ensure timely procurement and full payment to farmers are as under:

(i) FCI, the nodal central agency of Government of India, along with other State Agencies undertakes procurement of wheat and paddy under Minimum Support Price (MSP) operation. Coarse grains/millets in central pool are procured by State Government Agencies only under decentralized procurement system.

(ii) FCI and various State Agencies in consultation with the State Government establish a large number of purchase centers at various mandis and key points. The number of centers and their locations are decided by the State Governments, based on various parameters, so as to maximize the MSP operations. Such extensive & effective price support operations have resulted in sustaining the income of farmers over a period and in providing the required impetus for higher investment in agriculture sector for improved productivity.

(iii) Stocks conforming to the Government of India specifications which are offered by the farmers at purchase centers are procured by the Government Agencies at MSP. If the farmers get prices better than the support price in open market, they are free to sell their produce. Presence of Government Agencies ensures prevention of distress sale of food grains by the farmers.

(iv) Procurement of foodgrains under MSP operations is mandatorily being carried out through State Procurement Portals which has brought in substantial transparency in the process with introduction of registration of farmers for sale of their produce at govt. procuring centers/ mandis, land/crop verification and online payment of MSP directly into the farmer's bank account.

(v) "One Nation, One MSP through DBT" implemented across the country from RMS 2021-22 onwards. Payment of MSP has been ensured directly into farmers' account. DBT of MSP has brought in responsibility, transparency & real time monitoring in the system.

(vi) In order to widen the reach of MSP operations for food grains, Government of India has made a provision for engagement of Co-operative societies/ Self Help Groups/ Panchayats/ Primary Agriculture Credit Societies (PACS)/Farmers Producer Organisations (FPOs) by the State procuring agencies so that maximum farmers, can avail the benefit of price support operations.

(d). All the initiatives mentioned at point (a) above, are found very helpful to improve food grain storage under PDS.
