

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1625
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13/02/2026

ADDITION OF COLD CHAIN AND STORAGE CAPACITY

1625. DR. BHAGWAT KARAD:

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

- (a) the cold chain and storage capacity added during the last three years under Government supported schemes, particularly for Marathwada region;
- (b) the manner in which these facilities align with horticulture clusters across the region;
- (c) whether crop specific infrastructure supports pomegranate, sweet lime, soybean, pulses and vegetable growers;
- (d) whether measurable reductions in post harvest losses and distress sales have been recorded;
- (e) if so, the details thereof;
- (f) the coordination mechanism between the State Government, FPOs, cooperatives and private players for last mile connectivity; and
- (g) the steps taken to ensure affordability, climate resilience and access for small and marginal farmers of the region?

ANSWER

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

(a): As on date, so far, 353 number of Cold Storage with capacity of 17.02 lakh MT have been approved under various Government supported schemes in the country including Marathwada region during last three years.

(b) & (c): Government of India is implementing Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) and other Government supported schemes such as the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund and schemes of the National Horticulture Board (NHB); crop-specific post-harvest infrastructure is supported to benefit growers of horticultural crops including pomegranate, sweet lime and vegetables. Assistance is provided for establishment of cold storages, controlled atmosphere (CA) storages, pack houses, primary processing units, ripening chambers and refrigerated transport facilities, based on crop requirements and local production clusters.

Further, under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana (PMKSY), Scheme of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, financial assistance is provided for creation of integrated cold chain and value addition infrastructure including reefer transport facilities.

The infrastructure created under various Government schemes is aligned with identified horticulture clusters and major production belts to ensure efficient post-harvest management and value chain integration. In the State of Maharashtra, including the Marathwada region, which is known for crops such as sweet orange, pomegranate, mango and vegetables, financial assistance is extended for establishment of cold storages, pack houses and integrated pack houses based on proposals received from the State Government and eligible entrepreneurs. These projects are demand/entrepreneur driven and are approved as per scheme guidelines, subject to technical feasibility and availability of funds, etc. in proximity to production clusters to minimize post-harvest losses and facilitate aggregation, grading, storage and transportation.

For crops such as soybean and pulses, which fall under the purview of their concerned schemes of the Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, support is also available under these schemes for storage infrastructure including warehouses, scientific storage structures and processing units to reduce post-harvest losses and improve value realization.

(d) & (e): As these schemes are demand-driven and implemented through States/UTs and eligible beneficiaries, assessment of reduction in post-harvest losses and distress sales is not maintained centrally in a crop or region-specific manner. However, cold chain and storage infrastructure created under these scheme has helped in extending shelf life of perishable commodities, reducing quantitative and qualitative losses, enabling better price realization and minimizing distress sales by allowing farmers to store and market their produce in a planned manner.

(f) & (g): The Government facilitates coordination between the State Government, Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), cooperatives and private sector entities under various schemes such as the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), National Horticulture Board (NHB), Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) and Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana (PMKSY), each of which has its own approval and implementation mechanism. Under MIDH, proposals are routed through and recommended by the State Government and considered as per the provisions of the scheme, including approval by the competent authorities at State level. Under NHB, AIF and PMKSY, eligible beneficiaries including FPOs, cooperatives and private entrepreneurs submit proposals directly to the respective implementing agencies/financing institutions for appraisal and sanction as per scheme guidelines. Convergence and coordination are facilitated through consultations, review meetings and monitoring mechanisms at State and district levels to ensure effective last-mile connectivity between production clusters and markets.

To ensure affordability and access for small and marginal farmers, financial assistance is provided as per the norms of the respective schemes, with specific provisions for FPOs and cooperatives to promote collective access to infrastructure.

Further, climate-resilient and energy-efficient technologies, including modern cold chain systems, solar-assisted units and scientific storage structures, are promoted under the scheme to enhance sustainability and optimize operational costs. These interventions aim to strengthen inclusive access to post-harvest infrastructure and improve value realization for small and marginal farmers in the country.
