

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

**RAJYA SABHA**  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1952  
**TO BE ANSWERED ON 10<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2026**

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SMART-PDS**

**1952 SHRI R. DHARMAR:**

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

- (a) how many States have adopted the SMART-PDS system so far and the challenges they are facing in the implementation process;
- (b) the primary objectives of the SMART-PDS scheme in improving the Public Distribution System (PDS) in the country, the percentage of population expected to benefit from the modernization efforts under SMART-PDS;
- (c) whether Government allocated funds for strengthening digital infrastructure and internet connectivity in remote areas for effective implementation of SMART-PDS; and
- (d) the measures being taken to ensure that beneficiaries in remote or rural areas with limited digital access can benefit from SMART-PDS?

**A N S W E R**

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

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(a) This Department has signed MoUs with 36 States/UTs for the SMART-PDS scheme. At present, the development of SMART PDS is under progress.

The adoption of SMART-PDS modules across States/UTs is being carried out in a phased manner depending on the readiness of States/UTs and migration of their legacy systems. During the implementation process, certain operational and technical challenges are being addressed in consultation with States/UTs, including:

- 1. Variations in legacy workflows:** States follow different operational processes, which require configuration and alignment with the standardized SMART-PDS framework.
- 2. Differences in user management structures:** Variations in user hierarchy, roles and access control mechanisms across States require harmonization with the role-based access framework of SMART-PDS.
- 3. Variations in Ration Card (RC) and Fair Price Shop (FPS) formats:** Differences in formats and numbering conventions affect data validation and system integration.
- 4. Data discrepancies in legacy databases:** Issues such as duplicate ration cards or members,

multiple heads of family, Aadhaar duplication, missing mandatory fields and scheme mismatches require data cleansing prior to migration.

**5. Differences in beneficiary capping mechanisms:** States follow different entitlement and beneficiary capping practices which need to be configured in the system.

**6. Completion of technical integrations:** Certain States are in the process of completing integrations such as Aadhaar authentication enablement (AUA/Sub-AUA) and related technical requirements.

At present, implementation of different modules under SMART-PDS is at various stages across States/UTs. As per the current status:

- RCMS & FPS module has been deployed and implemented in 12 States/UTs, while 13 States/UTs have completed migration of ration card, FPS and transaction data.
- Supply Chain & Allocation module has been implemented in 20 States/UTs.
- Biometric-based distribution system has been implemented in 28 States/UTs.
- Procurement module has been implemented in Uttarakhand.

(b): The SMART-PDS scheme aims to strengthen the technology infrastructure of the Public Distribution System (PDS) and bring technology-driven reforms to improve efficiency, transparency and accountability in the delivery of foodgrains under the National Food Security Act (NFSA).

The scheme envisages development of an integrated and modular digital platform to streamline and modernize key PDS operations such as ration card management, supply chain management, allocation, procurement and biometric distribution through a centralized architecture across States/UTs.

The primary objectives of SMART-PDS include:

- strengthening end-to-end digital management of PDS operations;
- enabling integrated and standardized IT systems across States/UTs;
- improving transparency, efficiency and real-time monitoring of foodgrain distribution;
- reducing leakages and enhancing accountability in the system; and
- supporting data-driven policy decisions through improved analytics and reporting.

The modernization efforts under SMART-PDS are expected to benefit 100 % of all beneficiaries covered under NFSA across the country, which presently account for about 80 crore beneficiaries.

(c): Under the “Scheme for Modernization and Reforms through Technology in Public Distribution System (SMART-PDS)”, financial assistance is provided to States/UTs for strengthening digital infrastructure and implementation of technology-based PDS systems. Further, issues related to internet connectivity for ePoS devices at Fair Price Shops (FPSs) in remote and low-connectivity areas are taken up with the concerned authorities, including the Department of Telecommunications, to ensure smooth functioning of PDS operations.

(d): To ensure seamless delivery of services to beneficiaries in remote and rural areas, several measures have been undertaken by the Government. Electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) devices

installed at Fair Price Shops (FPSs) are enabled with offline functionality, which allows transactions to be carried out even in areas with limited or no internet connectivity. The transaction data is subsequently synchronized with the central PDS system once the device reconnects to the network.

Further, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has been requested to facilitate improvement of internet and mobile connectivity in identified shadow or low-network areas to support smooth functioning of ePoS devices. Additionally, under the One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) initiative, beneficiaries are empowered to lift their entitled foodgrains from any FPS with an operational ePoS device across the country, thereby minimizing service disruptions arising due to connectivity constraints at specific locations.

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