

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.3624
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21ST MARCH, 2025**

DISTRIBUTION AND CONSUMPTION OF FORTIFIED RICE

3624. SHRI SASIKANTH SENTHIL:

Will the Minister of **HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has any data of the distribution and consumption of fortified rice across the country, including any reported health effects, particularly among vulnerable populations and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government is aware of the side effects of fortified rice, particularly in tribal communities and if so, the details thereof alongwith the manner in which consumption of such rice is responding to the concerns raised regarding health risks such as iron toxicity;
- (c) the measures implemented by the Government to prevent the risk of excess iron intake from fortified rice, which could lead to potential health issues such as hypertension, diabetes and oxidative stress;
- (d) the manner in which the Government ensures that fortified rice is properly labeled, including clear health warnings for at-risk populations, as per the FSSAI regulations particularly for individuals with conditions like thalassemia or iron overload; and
- (e) whether there are any other labeling or health-related requirements being enforced in this context, if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY
WELFARE
(SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV)**

(a) to (c): Department of Food and Public Distribution has informed that during the current Financial year (2024-25), 388.45 Lakh Metric Tonnes (LMT) of fortified rice has been distributed/ lifted till 17.03.2025 under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS). Also, Rice Fortification involves the addition of Fortified Rice Kernels (FRK) enriched with micronutrients (Iron, Folic Acid, Vitamin B12) to regular Rice (Custom Milled Rice), as per the standards prescribed by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has informed that there is limited evidence of transient adverse effects among participants consuming iron fortified rice. Another notable finding is that considering the level of iron fortification in rice in India, the total iron intake through fortified rice is less than 0.59 mg/kg/day for any age group, which is well within the normal daily iron requirement.

(d) & (e): FSSAI has notified Food Safety and Standards (Fortification of Foods) Regulations, 2018 which includes the labelling provisions for fortified food. In case of any violations, penal action is taken against the defaulting Food Business Operators as per the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, Rules and Regulations.
