

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1980
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11TH FEBRUARY, 2026

FORTIFIED RICE

1980. SMT. HARSIMRAT KAUR BADAL:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a): whether the Government is aware that rice shellers/millers in Punjab are facing serious operational and financial difficulties due to the present system of compulsory blending of Fortified Rice Kernels (FRK) including acute non-availability and delayed supply of FRK, arising from new testing and approval norms;

(b): if so, whether the Government has received a large number of representations regarding testing delays, increases in production costs and black marketing;

(c): the quantity of fortified rice from Punjab that has been declared "beyond rejection limit" or returned by Food Corporation of India (FCI) during the last three marketing seasons and the financial liability imposed on millers for replacement, storage and related charges; and

(d): whether the Government proposes to review FRK testing protocols, pricing etc. and make an assessment on the impact of FRK to protect both public health objectives and the viability of the rice shelling industry and if so, the details thereof?

A N S W E R

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

(a) and (b): Till date approx 20 LMT of fortified rice (FR) has been procured in the state of Punjab during KMS 2025-26. Further, the rice millers/shellers benefit from the revised process, as the quality testing of Fortified Rice Kernels (FRK) is now conducted at procurement stage. Earlier, the rice millers/shellers were largely responsible for ensuring the FRK quality and faced the risk of FR lots being affected, if samples failed at a later stage. The current system reduces the overall compliance burden on shellers/rice millers and streamlines the overall operations.

(c): The details on the quantity of fortified rice from Punjab State that has been declared as Beyond Rejection Limit (BRL) or returned by Food Corporation of India (FCI) during last three marketing seasons are as under:

KMS	Quantity of fortified rice stock declared as BRL (in MT)
2022-23	15660
2023-24	5939.5
2024-25	4379

As per existing guidelines, the stock found BRL during the quality assessment is to be replaced by the concerned rice agencies/rice millers on their risk and cost.

(d): Based on the feedback received from the states/field implementations, the department has reviewed and streamlined the FRK testing/quality assurance procedures by issuing a SoP on 29.07.2025 and further amending on 06.12.2025.

These revisions strengthen end-to-end testing and oversight to make sure that, only quality FRK is blended with the conventional rice. This ensures that, the produced FR meets with the notified standards of FSSAI and helps to protect the public health objectives. The revised procedures also address the operational issues to enable smoother implementation for rice millers/rice shelling units.