

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5302
TO BE ANSWERED ON 25TH MARCH, 2026

DISTRIBUTION OF FORTIFIED RICE UNDER PDS

5302. SHRI PRADEEP PUROHIT:

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

(a): whether the Government is aware of the fact that fortified rice is being distributed to beneficiaries under the Public Distribution System (PDS) to address deficiencies of vitamins and minerals and if so, the details thereof;

(b): whether it has come to the notice of the Government that a large number of beneficiaries avoid consuming this fortified rice due to its different appearance, either use it for other purposes or discard it as waste and if so, the details thereof;

(c): the total amount of money spent by the Government on the distribution of fortified rice during the last three years and the steps being taken by the Government to ensure that the nutritional benefits of this scheme actually reach the beneficiaries; and

(d): whether the Government has undertaken any public awareness or sensitization programmes to educate people about the health benefits of fortified rice and to prevent wastage of public funds 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): Yes sir, to achieve uniform nutritional impact of fortified rice among the targeted population, the Government of India is supplying fortified rice through all food safety net schemes. The Rice Fortification Initiative aims to provide fortified rice enriched with essential micronutrients such as iron, folic acid, and vitamin B12 to tackle micronutrient deficiencies, particularly anemia.

(b): No such report has come to the notice of the Department of Food & Public Distribution (DFPD).

A formative research study by Indian Council of Medical Research - National Institute of Nutrition (ICMR-NIN) has identified that a few beneficiaries mistake floating Fortified Rice Kernels (FRKs) for contaminants, chaff or debris. This leads to the physical removal and discarding of the fortified kernels by them during pre-cooking.

(c) & (d): Food subsidy is released for distribution of foodgrains (Wheat, Rice and Coarse grains), no commodity wise food subsidy released is maintained by DFPD. The total food subsidy released for distribution of foodgrains (including fortified rice) for the last three years is as under:

| S.No. | Financial Year | Amount (in Rs. Crore) |
|--------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | 2022-23 | 272501.69 |
| 2 | 2023-24 | 211394.39 |
| 3 | 2024-25 | 199499.67 |

To educate people about the benefits of fortified rice, various State Governments were requested to organize programmes to create awareness on benefits of fortified rice and its positive impact on nutritional security in the tribal areas of the country. Besides, various workshops were held at Divisional/Regional Office level by FCI to sensitize the stakeholders about the nutrition related benefits of fortified rice.

Information, Education, Communication (IEC) materials were also shared by DFPD with States/UTs for their dissemination for spreading awareness about it. A provision of Administrative/Contingency Cost which inter-alia includes IEC and Capacity Building to the tune of Rs. 5.00 lakh per district was made, which was to be borne by the Government of India, during the implementation of rice fortification initiative in Phase-II and Phase-III.
