

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 876
TO BE ANSWERED ON 4TH FEBRUARY, 2026

RELAXING OF THE MOISTURE NORMS

876. THIRU THANGA TAMILSELVAN:

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

- (a): whether the Union Government has received any letter from the State Government of Tamil Nadu requesting to relax the moisture norm from 17 per cent to 22 per cent to avoid ruin and to save the paddy farmers from heavy losses to raise the Union's Kharif procurement target for Tamil Nadu from 16 lakh tonnes to match actual output and ease norms for sampling Fortified Rice Kernels (FRK) so that hulling and movement of stocks are not slowed down;
- (b): if so, the details thereof;
- (c): whether any action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government on the Tamil Nadu Government request; and
- (d): if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

A N S W E R
MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS,
FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(**SHRIMATI NIMUBEN JAYANTIBHAI BAMBHANIYA**)

(a) to (d): Yes. The request of the State Government of Tamil Nadu to relax the moisture norm for paddy from 17 % to 22% has not been considered due to following facts:

- Paddy can be dried before milling; procurement of excessively moist paddy introduces significant operational risk, including loss of stock during storage and compromised milling recovery.
- Paddy with high moisture content is susceptible in terms of rapid deterioration, fungal growth, discolouration, and infestation.
- The State Governments have been repeatedly advised to develop driage facilities at the procurement stages.
- The relaxation in moisture content has no direct financial implication on farmers, therefore, such relaxation is no longer considered.

Further, the estimates for procurement of paddy are finalized by the Government of India in consultation with the State Governments before the commencement of each marketing season,

based on estimated production, marketable surplus and crop patterns. Accordingly, the estimates of procurement of paddy for KMS 2025-26 (Kharif crop) in Tamil Nadu have been fixed at 16.00 Lakh Metric Tonnes (LMT) in terms of rice.

Moreover, with respect to the easing of norms for sampling Fortified Rice Kernels (FRK), the department has revised the Fortified Rice Kernels (FRK) sample size from 10 MT to 21 MT and packaging size from 25 Kg to 50 Kg.
