

# Business Standard

## **Pilot scheme on fortification of rice and distribution through PDS approved by govt: WCD Ministry**

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A centrally-sponsored pilot scheme on fortification of rice and its dispersal through Public Distribution System (PDS) has been approved by the government, the Women and Child Development Ministry said on Thursday.

Fortification is a complementary strategy to fight malnutrition under which the addition of key vitamins and minerals such as iron, iodine, zinc, vitamins A & D to staple foods such as rice, wheat, oil, milk and salt are done to improve their nutritional content.

Replying to a Rajya Sabha question, WCD Minister Smriti Irani said, according to information received from the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, the Department of Food and Public Distribution has approved the "Centrally Sponsored Pilot Scheme on fortification of rice and its distribution through Public Distribution System."

"Financial assistance of up to 90 per cent in case of North-Eastern, Hilly and Island States and up to 75 per cent in case of rest of the States has been extended.

"Further, the Government of India has also advised all states and UTs especially those states and UTs, that are distributing wheat flour through PDS, to distribute fortified wheat flour through PDS," she said, in a written reply.

She further said that the requirement of nutrients in children varies with age, gender and nutritional status of the children.

The Recommended Dietary Allowance for Indian population is finalized by the National Institute of Nutrition Indian Council of Medical Research (NIN-ICMR) based on the recommendations of the Expert Group, based on individual variability and nutrient bio-availability from the habitual diet, she said.