



Digital Platforms to Enhance India's PDS System

[Source: PIB](#)

The **Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution** has launched 3 digital initiatives- **Depot Darpan Portal**, **Anna Mitra Mobile App**, and **Anna Sahayata Grievance Redressal System**.

- These initiatives aim to improve **transparency, efficiency, and accessibility** within India's [Public Distribution System \(PDS\)](#), benefiting over 81 crore people under the [National Food Security Act](#).

What are Depot Darpan Portal, Anna Mitra Mobile App and Anna Sahayata?

- **Depot Darpan Portal:** Depot Darpan is a **self-assessment and monitoring portal** for food grain depots managed by the [Food Corporation of India \(FCI\)](#) and [Central Warehousing Corporation \(CWC\)](#).
 - **Key Features:**
 - **Tech-Driven Ratings:** It uses a **composite rating system** evaluating **occupancy, profitability, storage efficiency, safety, environmental sustainability, and statutory compliance**, supported by **IoT sensors, CCTV, live video feeds, and real-time analytics**.
 - The portal is expected to result in **Rs 275 crore in savings for FCI** and generate **Rs 140 crore additional revenue for CWC** by **optimizing storage space and operations**.
- **Anna Mitra App:** Anna Mitra is a **mobile app** designed for [Fair Price Shop \(FPS\)](#) dealers, **District Food & Supply Officers (DFSO)**, and **Food Inspectors** under the Public Distribution System (PDS).
 - **Key Features:**
 - **Role-Based Functionalities:** It enables **FPS dealers** to track stock receipts, sales, and alerts; **DFSO** to monitor FPS performance, handle grievances, and access beneficiary data; and **inspectors** to conduct **geo-tagged inspections**.
 - Aimed at **enhancing transparency and accountability**, the app is **piloted in Assam, Uttarakhand, Tripura, and Punjab**, and is available in **Hindi and English**.
- **Anna Sahayata Platform:** Anna Sahayata is a **grievance redressal platform** for beneficiaries of **PMGKAY** and the [National Food Security Act \(NFSA\), 2013](#), covering over **81 crore people**.
 - It enables grievance registration via **WhatsApp, IVRS, and Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR)**, improving **accessibility, accountability, and efficiency**.

What is the Public Distribution System (PDS)?

- **About:** The [PDS](#) is a **food security mechanism** that provides **essential foodgrains at subsidized rates** to vulnerable populations.
 - It is governed by the **NFSA, 2013** covering about **two-thirds of the population** based

on **Census 2011**.

- PDS mainly supplies **wheat, rice, sugar, and kerosene**, with some states also distributing **pulses, edible oils, and salt**.

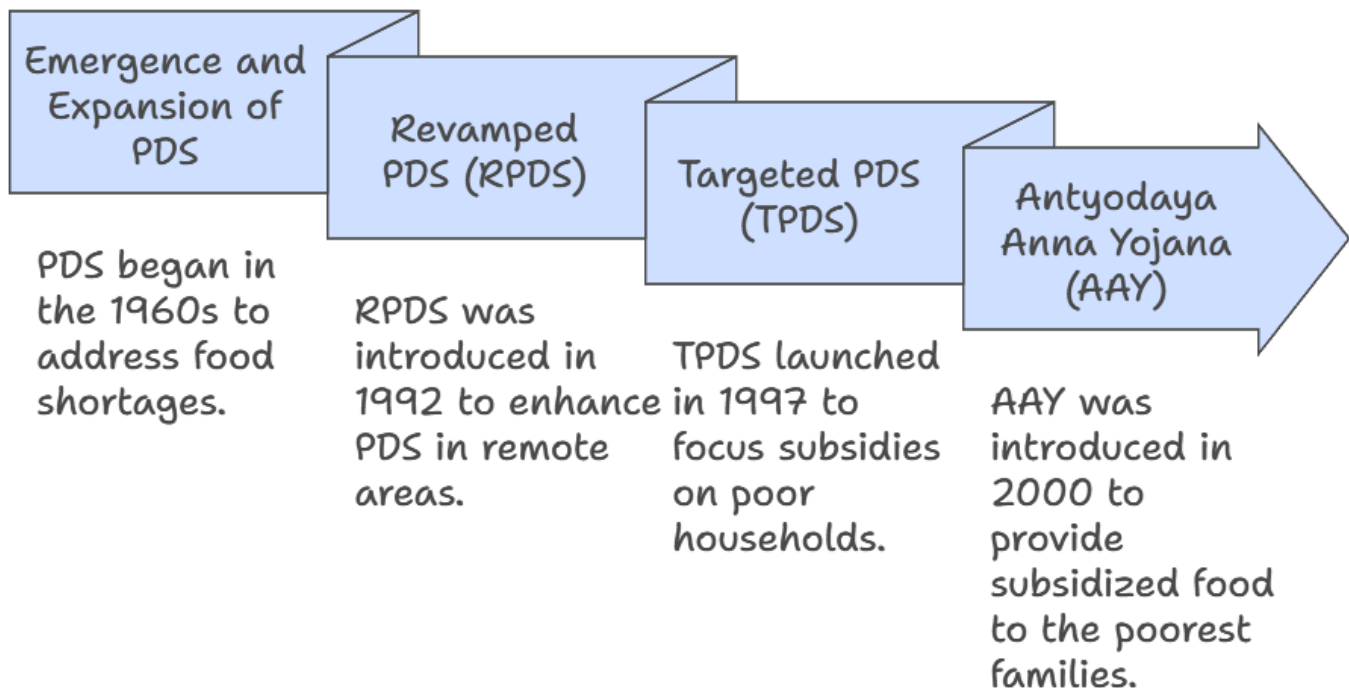
▪ **Implementation:** Jointly managed by the **Centre and States/UTs**, the **Central Government (through FCI)** oversees procurement, storage, transportation, and bulk allocation of foodgrains.

- While **State Governments** handle local distribution, beneficiary identification, ration card issuance, and Fair Price Shop (FPS) operations.

▪ **Initiatives to Reform India's PDS:**

- **Anna Chakra** is a **supply chain optimization tool** for the **PDS** to reduce transport distances by 15-50% and save Rs 250 crore annually.
- **SCAN (System for Computerized Allocation and Notification)** streamlines food subsidy claims through a **unified, automated, rule-based portal**.
- **One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC)**
- **Technology-Driven Reforms in PDS:**
 - **SMART-PDS Scheme (2023-2026)** to upgrade technology in **End-to-End Computerization and Integrated Management of PDS (ImPDS)**.
 - **Computerized FPS** and use of **POS machines** for **real-time authentication** and tracking of grain distribution.
 - **Aadhaar linkage** improves beneficiary identification; **DBT** enables cash transfers.
 - **GPS tracking** of grain delivery and **SMS alerts** to update citizens on dispatch and arrival.

Evolution of Public Distribution System (PDS)



UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q.1 In the context of India's preparation for Climate-Smart Agriculture, consider the following statements: (2021)

1. The 'Climate-Smart Village' approach in India is a part of a project led by the Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS), an international research programme.
2. The project of CCAFS is carried out under Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) headquartered in France.
3. The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) in India is one of the CGIAR's research centers.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (d)

Q.2 With reference to the provisions made under the National Food Security Act, 2013, consider the following statements: (2018)

1. The families coming under the category of 'below poverty line (BPL)' only are eligible to receive subsidized food grains.
2. The eldest woman in a household, of age 18 years or above, shall be the head of the household for the purpose of issuance of a ration card.
3. Pregnant women and lactating mothers are entitled to a 'take-home ration' of 1600 calories per day during pregnancy and for six months thereafter.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 3 only

Ans: (b)