

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Govt to distribute fortified rice in Malkangiri

TNN | Sep 12, 2019

Berhampur: The state government has decided to distribute fortified rice through the public distribution system (PDS) in Malkangiri district on a pilot basis from January. The rice enriched with minerals and vitamins will be distributed to address the problem of anaemia and micro-nutrients deficiency among people.

“The NITI Aayog has identified 15 districts across the country to implement the scheme for distribution of fortified rice. Malkangiri, a tribal-dominated and Maoist belt, has been chosen from our state,” said food supplies and consumer welfare minister, Ranendra Pratap Swain, on Wednesday.

Swain said all beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) and State Food Security Scheme (SFSS) would get the fortified rice. The scheme would be extended to other districts basing on the success of the project in Malkangiri.

He said the government would float tender to identify the agency to supply fortified rice to the state. The quantity to be supplied is yet to be calculated, said Swain, who along with agriculture minister Arun Sahoo were in Chhatrapur to attend an event organised by Rushikulya Rait Mahasabha, a farmers’ organisation. Under the scheme, fortified rice kernels (FRK) are blended with rice in a ratio of 1:100. It means that one metric tonne of FRK is mechanically blended with every 100 metric tonnes of rice to get 101 metric tonnes of appropriately fortified rice that provides iron, Vitamin B12 and folic acid.

The state has been implementing the rice fortification scheme in midday meal in Gajapati since 2013. The scheme was launched through MDM that covered 81,314 students in 1,230 schools. The anaemia level among school children reduced by 28% in the last six years, a survey by ICMR-RMRC (Regional Medical Research Centre) Bhubaneswar, revealed.