Grain ATM

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | Government policies ands interventions*

Why in News?

Recently, Bihar has approved the installation of grain ATMs on a pilot basis in Patna to improve transparency and efficiency in the Public Distribution System.

- Grain ATM is an *automated machine that dispenses food grains such as wheat and rice*. Works like a bank ATM for ration distribution.
- It is also known as Annapurti, i.e., the provider of grain.
- This is a ***Central government project.***
- **Objective -** To improve transparency, reduce time spent queuing at ration shops and curb leakages and corruption in the distribution system.
- **Developed by –** The ***World Food Programme*** in collaboration with Food Corporation of India and various state governments.
- **Implemented by –***Centre and states*, with shared responsibility for maintenance and security.
- In Bihar, the Food and Consumer Protection Department is the nodal implementing agency.
- **Dispersion –** Can dispense ***up to 50 kilograms of grain*** within a few minutes.
- **Coverage –** Currently limited to urban areas, with plans to expand to Panchayat levels.
- *At least 6 states, including Odisha*, have been using the machines on a pilot basis.
- **Key Features – Availability –** Operates round the clock 24/7 like banking ATMs.
- **Sustainability** – Can ***function using solar energy.***
- **Connectivity** – Requires internet connectivity to access Public Distribution System data.
- **Efficiency** – Reduces waiting time and addresses inefficiencies in manual

ration distribution.

- **Mechanism –** Beneficiary swipes the ration or grain ATM card with Aadhaar linkage.
- Grain type and quantity are selected on the machine.
- After the Grain is dispensed, the Public Distribution System records are updated.
- At the end, a confirmation slip is issued to beneficiaries as a physical record.
- **Significance -** According to the World Food Programme, grain ATMs can *reduce waiting time by about 70%.*

Reference

IE | Grain ATM

