

Grain ATM

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Government policies and 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 Annapurni, 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](#)

