

## Overflowing Granaries

### Why in news?

Punjab's granaries are overflowing with foodgrains due to the suspension of train traffic due to farmers' protest against Centre's farm laws.

### What is the situation of foodgrains in granaries?

- The granaries in Punjab are overflowing with wheat and paddy.
- Nearly 110 lakh metric tonne of wheat from the last procurement season is still lying in the open and covered godowns.
- The granaries still have 55 lakh metric tonnes of rice from the last paddy procurement season.
- The state has only 110-lakh metric tonne capacity under covered space.
- Nearly 25 lakh metric tonne and 30 lakh metric tonne grains from 2018-19 and 2018-19 procurement seasons are still lying at the granaries.

### How was disruption of trains affecting the granaries?

- Train traffic remained disrupted in the state for nearly 2 months after the farmers started blocking railway tracks to protest.
- After that, the Union Ministry of Railways suspended the train traffic.
- This affected the evacuation of granaries, which led to its overflow.
- This overflow added to the miseries of the government miseries that have been at loss to accommodate paddy still arriving at its mandis.
- Had the movement continued, 50-60 lakh metric tonnes of grains would have been moved out of the state.

### How much more grain inflow is expected?

- The state has procured a record 200 lakh metric tonnes of paddy this procurement season.
- After shelling, at least 140 lakh metric tonnes of rice would need to be stored in covered godowns.
- As rice is not as hardy a grain as wheat, it needs to be stored in covered spaces.
- With portions of old stock still lying in the granaries; the state will need lots of space to store rice from this procurement season.

## How had the pandemic come as a relief for the granaries?

- Evacuation of food grains had started at a fast pace after the Centre started distributing grains to the underprivileged during lockdown.
- In September also, 1,000 rakes were sent to other states till the train traffic was disrupted in the month end.

## Why has the outward movement been slow?

- Since other states started contributing to the central pool, the outward movement of grains from Punjab has been affected.
- Punjab averages outward movement of 6-7 lakh metric tonnes of rice and 2-3 lakh metric tonnes of wheat every month from the godowns.
- Had the trains not been disrupted, the evacuation would have been at least five times than the average.
- With the restoration of train traffic, the state now hopes that evacuation will take place at a faster pace.

**Source: The Indian Express**

