

Cabinet briefing

Wednesday, 27th May 2026





SARTHAK-PDS Scheme (Rs 25,530 Cr)

SARTHAK-PDS

- SARTHAK-PDS :
 1. Assistance to State Agencies for intra-State movement of food grains
 2. Support for fair price shops
 3. Modernisation of public distribution system
- Total Outlay: **Rs 25,530 crores**
- Duration: **5 years** (1st April 2026 - 31st March 2031)

SMART PDS Phase 2

SMART PDS: Introducing three major **AI-enabled modules**

- **NIRMAL**
 - AI-driven real-time PDS beneficiary registry
 - Live inter-ministry integration and cross-scheme convergence.
- **ASHA:**
 - Multilingual AI grievance and citizen engagement platform across calls, WhatsApp, IVRS, and chatbot
 - Scalable to 3 lakh interactions/day.
- **SAKSHAM**
 - AI-enabled supply chain platform with vehicle tracking, QR traceability, demand forecasting, and route optimisation

Benefits

- Accurate identification of eligible beneficiaries
- Improved satisfaction for citizens
- **ASHA - AI food security assistant** -> Faster grievance redressal in preferred language
- Will save food grain and encourage local procurement -> 15-50% reduction in travel distance for food grains
- **Improve logistics** -> 280 Cr annual savings and 35% reduction in carbon emissions -> QR coded tags for bags and vehicle location systems

