

# Rice procurement tops 45 mt but down 7 per cent y-o-y

**THE DAMPENERS.** Purchase down 36% in Andhra Pradesh, 28% in Telangana

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Rice procurement by Food Corporation of India (FCI) reached 45.44 million tonnes (mt) as of March 31 after the 2023-24 kharif marketing season began on October 1. This is 7.3 per cent lower from 49.01 mt procured a year ago. However, rice procurement in Chhattisgarh, which ended on February 4, was 8.3 mt against 5.87 mt last year. It is higher than the production estimate of 7.82 mt, raising questions over the entire purchase mechanism.

As the procurement target for kharif-grown rice is 52.5 mt and it will continue till April 30 in Jharkhand, until May 31 in West Bengal and up to June 30 in Assam, the government is hopeful of buying another 4-5 mt. This is possible if procurement picks up in West Bengal, sources said. West Bengal, a



**LOWER SUPPLIES.** The Agriculture Ministry has estimated the country's rice production from both kharif and rabi seasons 1 per cent lower at 123.82 mt during 2023-24 crop year (July-June) from 125.52 mt in 2022-23

leading producer, has reported a drop in procurement at 0.78 mt from 2.07 mt a year ago.

Procurement in Punjab, Haryana and other northern States got completed in December while in western Uttar Pradesh it ended on January 31 and in eastern UP on February 29. The FCI has procured 12.41 mt in Punjab,

which is 2 per cent higher from 12.19 mt a year ago and in Haryana, it is 3.94 mt against 3.95 mt in 2022-23.

## **HUGE GAP IN AP**

In Uttar Pradesh, the Centre has procured 3.61 mt of rice against 4.39 mt year-ago. Telangana's rice purchase ended lower at 3.17 mt against 4.36

mt. Kharif season's rice procurement in Odisha, which ended on March 31, was 3.95 mt, lower from 4.42 mt a year ago. There is a huge drop of 36 per cent in Andhra Pradesh, where too procurement ended, and it was 1.34 mt against 2.1 mt a year ago. The government had purchased a total of 56.87 mt of rice in 2022-23 from all kharif, rabi and zaid seasons. The Agriculture Ministry has estimated the country's rice production from both kharif and rabi seasons 1 per cent lower at 123.82 mt during 2023-24 crop year (July-June) from 125.52 mt in 2022-23. The estimates have not included the zaid crop, which is sown after rabi harvest. In 2022-23, rice production from zaid season was 10.24 mt.

Rice procurement is key to the government food security programme as it had substituted wheat in the public distribution programme at many States in 2021-22.