News: Less than 3% of this season’s sanctioned amount of pulses and oilseeds have actually been procured so far under the oncehyped PMAASHA scheme, Agriculture Ministry data show.

Prelims and Mains focus: About PM-AASHA, its significance and challenges in its implementation

About PM-AASHA

The PMAASHA or Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan, was announced with great fanfare in September 2018, as an effort to ensure that farmers growing pulses, oilseeds and copra actually get the minimum support prices they are promised for their crops each year.

Apart from initiatives to allow cash payment to farmers or procurement by private traders, PM-AASHA’s main feature was a price support scheme whereby Central agencies would procure pulses and oilseeds directly from farmers.

The Centre had budgeted ₹15,053 crore over two years to implement the scheme apart from an additional government credit guarantee of ₹16,550 crore for agencies undertaking procurement.

The main crops covered under the scheme this season are moong, urad, arhar, groundnut and soyabean.

Challenges

The late arrival of the monsoon means that harvests and crop arrivals also began slightly later than expected, especially for arhar or tur dal, so procurement is likely to continue, though tapering, until February.
Increasing MSP is not adequate and it is more important that farmers should get full benefit of the announced MSP.