

Q3) Most grain in India, which is procured from farmers by the government, is stored using the cover & plinth method. Discuss the merit of silo storage of food grains against the CAP method.

Food Corporation of India (FCI) is responsible for availability of food grains including the maintenance of ~~of~~ buffer stocks. It has been observed that most grains procured from farmers is stored using the Cover & Plinth method (CAP)

CAP is economically efficient method for storage of bagged grains on a plinth that is damp & rat proof yet is susceptible to damage in monsoonal climate of India.

A strong case for silo storage of grains must be considered for the fact that —

- It requires  $\frac{1}{3}^{\text{th}}$  of land availability than traditional method due to tall vertical towers.
- Machine based moisture & temperature control is possible which the CAP lacks.
- Negligible amount of wastage due to weather conditions whereas CAP is known to lose about 2 million tonnes every year.
- Internationally accepted practice, such that the grains to be exported from Punjab are stored in silos facility.

Even Indus Valley Civilization had a primitive silo system for storage made up of earthen pots that was fungal resistant. But jute bags used in CAP method is prone to fungal attacks.

Although silos require high capital investment initially, it will ensure safe & hygiene food storage. If the government is worried with the overnight conversion to silos ~~is~~ affecting the jute farmers, it can facilitate to direct the resource to replace polythene bags in other consumer sector.