GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:307
ANSWERED ON:13.03.2006
FERTILITY OF DROUGHT HIT AREAS
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the fertility of the drought hit areas gets diminished;

(b) if so, the efforts made by the Government to improve the fertility of such areas during the last two years; and

(c) the progress made in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a) to (c): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 307 DUE FOR REPLY ON 13TH MARCH, 2006.

(a): In general, occurrence of drought does not have significant effect on diminishing the soil fertility in short run. However, higher frequency of droughts can have adverse effect on soil fertility by way of

(i) reduced bio-mass production,

(ii) fast decomposition of organic matter,

(iii) poor bio-activity in the rhizosphere and

(iv) deterioration of soil structure and water holding capacity etc.

(b)&(c): The Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture (CRIDA), Hyderabad and its net work of 25 All India Coordinated Research Project on Dry land Agriculture (AICRPDA) centres provide technical support to the State Governments by way of training and exposure visits on managing soil fertility during drought through various technologies in different agro- ecological region.

The Research Project has found the following techniques for improving fertility of such areas

(i) incorporation of biomass and application of green leaf manures or organic manures

(ii) integrated use of organic manures, bio-fertilizers and chemical fertilizers based on soil testing

(iii) land coverage with litter/mulch and ley farming

(iv) promoting agro forestry system and plantation of perennial biomass yielding trees on bunds and incorporating in the soil

(v) raising of drought tolerant cover crops during off season and its incorporation in the soil and

(vi) controlling of wind erosion through shelter belt plantation to minimize the drought induced soil degradation.