

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3603

ANSWERED ON:10.09.2007

ARABLE LAND

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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the total area of arable land in the country alongwith number of farmers` families subsisting thereon;
- (b) whether the Union Government is mulling to provide maximum number of jobs in the service sector to the farmers; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA)

(a) to (c): As per available estimates, total arable/cultivable land is 182.57 million ha. in 2005-06 and there are 127.30 million cultivators and 106.80 million agricultural laboureres in the country.

Government of India has enacted the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) on August 25, 2005, which provides a legal guarantee for one hundred days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household willing to do unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage. The scheme starting from February 2, 2006 in 200 districts will cover all districts in five years. The Government announced its implementation in additional 130 districts in the financial year 2007-08. Besides this, Government of India has also launched a Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana, on 25th September 2001 by merging the on-going schemes of Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) and Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS). The main objectives of the programme are to provide additional wage employment in the rural areas as also the food security, alongside the creation of durable community, social and economic infrastructure in the rural areas.

Government of India is also implementing various programmes namely,

- (i) National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Area (NWDPA),
- (ii) Soil Conservation for Enhancing the Productivity of Degraded Lands in the Catchments of River Valley Project and Flood Prone River (RVP & FPR),
- (iii) Reclamation of Alkali Soil (RAS),
- (iv) Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSA),
- (v) Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP),
- (vi) Desert Development Programme (DDP),
- (vii) Integrated Waste-land Development Project (IWDP) for development of degraded lands, which help in generating employment opportunities in rural area in the country.