

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:876

ANSWERED ON:07.02.2017

Loss of Crops

Datta Shri Sankar Prasad;Manjhi Shri Hari;Patil Shri Sanjay(Kaka) Ramchandra;Selvam Shri V. Panneer;Shetty Shri Gopal
Chinayya;Tiwari Shri Manoj Kumar

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether farmers have suffered huge losses due to damage to their crops on account of natural calamities such as drought, unseasonal heavy rains, hailstorm, inclement weather conditions and pest attacks in various parts of the country during the last three years and the current year and if so, the details thereof, State-wise along with the remedial action taken to avert such losses;

(b) whether the economic condition of farmers is worsening due to such losses and if so, the details thereof along with the financial assistance/relief provided to them by the Government to mitigate their problems;

(c) whether any programme has been started to prevent/manage the frequently occurring drought conditions in the country and if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government proposes to set up several meteorology and environment related centres to provide information to farmers with regard to agriculture at panchayat level in various States and if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether the Government proposes to announce any special minimum support price for crops in the current season following the recommendation of Swaminathan Committee report and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

श्री अहलुवालिया (श्री S.S. AHLUWALIA)

(a) & (b): The Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare (DAC & FW) is mandated for coordination of relief efforts necessitated by drought. State Governments are primarily responsible for taking necessary relief in the wake of natural

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calamities and are empowered to initiate immediate relief measures to address the situation arising out of drought. Government of India supplements the efforts of state Governments with financial assistance. For undertaking relief measures, funds are available with the State Government in the form of State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF). Additional financial assistance, over and above SDRF, is considered from National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) for natural calamities of severe nature and is approved on the basis of Memorandum received from State Government in accordance with established procedure, keeping in view items and norms in vogue for assistance.

A number of States were affected by drought and hailstorm of varying magnitude during the years 2013-14 to 2016-17. Memoranda received from the drought affected States for assistance from National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) were considered in accordance with the established procedure and a statement indicating State-wise details assistance sought by the respective State and assistance approved by the Government of India from NDRF are indicated in the statement annexed as Annexure-I & II.

(c): Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare through ICAR-Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture (CRIDA), Hyderabad has prepared detailed crop Contingency Plans for 619 districts . States have been advised for preparing, updating, and fine-tuning Contingency Plans for each district in consultation with CRIDA-ICAR and the State Agriculture Universities and to prepare location specific remedial measures based on these contingency plans in the event of late arrival of Monsoon, long dry spells, scanty rainfall, drought conditions, tying up availability of seeds and other inputs for implementing the Contingency Plans.

Availability of Seeds etc. is being monitored and reviewed on a regular basis in the weekly Crop Weather Watch Group (CWWG) meeting being held in the Department. Video Conferences have been held with States to get first-hand information about preparedness and to advise States appropriately whenever needed.

States have been advised to keep aside about 5 to 10% of funds allocated under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) for undertaking appropriate interventions, if the situation so warrants, to minimize the advance impact of an aberrant monsoon on the

agriculture sector. The Central Government implements Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) / Central Sector (CS) Schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY), the Rainfed Area Development Programme (RAD), National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP), etc. which contribute towards drought proofing . Twenty five percent of total outlay for all CSS Schemes (except for schemes, which emanate from a legislation, e.g., MGNREGA), can be used as flexi funds to enable mitigation/ restoration activities in cases of natural calamities. In addition several activities can be undertaken using Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) funds and Fourteenth Finance Commission (FFC) grants to rural and urban local bodies in mitigation of impact in the event of a drought.

To mitigate the adverse impact of drought, State Governments are advised to initiate advance remedial action e.g. constructing water harvesting structures under MGNREGA and other such schemes, promoting agronomic practices for moisture conservation, promoting cultivation of less water consuming crops and restoring irrigation infrastructure by desilting canals, energizing tube-wells, replacing/repairing faulty pumps, to carry out periodic assessment of preparation for kharif crops, particularly contingency crops and also investment made in water conservation structure under various schemes like Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) to verify their utility in harvesting the rainfall.

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(d): Kisan Call Centres (KCC) has been launched with the basic aim to provide information to farming community through toll free number on all seven days a week.

m-Kisan Portal subsumes all mobile based initiatives in the field of agriculture and allied sector. Officers, Scientists and Experts from all organizations and Department of the Government of India and State Governments { including State Agricultural Universities (SAUs), Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) and Agro- Meteorological Field Units (AMFUs) } are using this Portal for disseminating information (giving topical & seasonal advisories and providing services through SMSs to farmers in their local languages) on various agricultural activities to registered farmers. The farmers can register for this service by calling Kisan Call Centre on toll free number 1800-180-1551 or through the web portal/SMS.

(e): [The National Commission on Farmers (NCF) under the Chairmanship of Prof. M. S. Swaminathan had recommended that the Minimum Support Price (MSP) should be at least 50% more than the weighted average cost of production].

Government has fixed MSP for 2016-17 based on the recommendation of Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices(CACP), views of the concerned State Governments and Central Ministries/Departments and other relevant factors. While recommending price policy, the CACP considers, inter alia, a number of factors which include cost of production, price trends in market prices, demand and supply situation, effect on general price level, effect on cost of living etc. MSP is recommended by the CACP based on objective criteria and considering variety of relevant factors.