

Title: Need to provide all possible financial assistance to the farmers for canal irrigation in Punjab –Laid.

SHRI PRATAP SINGH BAJWA (GURDASPUR): Punjab offered great comfort and relief to the Central Pool during the drought by keeping its paddy-sowing levels the same, as last year, by digging deeper to provide water for irrigation to save its paddy crop. The water table in Punjab has now gone down considerably this monsoon- and posing problems to the coming rabi crops. The ground water level in Central districts has declined by 1-1.5 metres since June 2009. Earlier, the farmers were forced to dig deeper at a heavy cost to save their paddy crop. The low water levels in reservoirs in the north, which feed Punjab's canal network and irrigate about 30 percent of its irrigated area are adding to the problem.

Since Punjab is a major contributor of wheat to the Central Pool, Government of India should extend all possible financial assistance to the farming community to meet the situation, especially financial aid for canal irrigation.

In addition, as assured in this august House by the Hon'ble Agriculture Minister, it may be ensured that the diesel subsidy promised to the farmers of Punjab reaches them at the earliest without waiting for the State subsidy.