

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-326
TO BE ANSWERED ON 09/12/2022

**IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND DROUGHT IN DELTA DISTRICTS OF
TAMIL NADU**

326. SHRI S.KALYANASUNDARAM:
SHRI R.GIRIRAJAN:
SHRI M.MOHAMED ABDULLA:

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

- (a) whether Government has conducted any study about the impact of drought, climate change and hydrocarbon excavations in the delta districts of Tamil Nadu affecting the farmers of these districts;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) the steps taken by Government to address the issues faced by the farmers of delta districts, particularly in respect to hydrocarbon excavation and climate change, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
(SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

- (a) to (d): Under the National Innovation for Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA), studies on ‘Assessment of Hydrological impacts due to Climate change and development of Best Irrigation and Crop Management Strategies that increases the Resilience: Cauvery and Tamiraparani River Basins’ have been undertaken in the last 5 years. Under this project, field survey has been conducted with a sample survey of 300 farmers in 10 blocks in the Cauvery delta region. The highlights of the survey are as under:
- The approach to climate change differs with various categories of farmers. Small and large farmers have varying opportunities and challenges to climate adaptation process all along the delta.

- Both South West and North East monsoons shape the agricultural systems in the delta. Climate variability is extremely felt in the old delta coastal zone and also in the coastal areas. Frequent droughts and floods extremely affect these tracts.
- For the past two decades, direct sowing of paddy is invariably practiced in the coastal belt due to water scarcity and escalation of cost of cultivation of paddy.
- Sea water enters in to irrigation channels and invades up to five to six km inland areas in the coastal zone (particularly in villages in Thalaignayar and Sirkali blocks). Salt water is being pumped from the channels to shrimp farms/ ponds which are made closer to the channels. As a result, the nearby agricultural lands have become saline.
- As water supply from Mettur dam is uncertain in most of the years, farmers in the delta are increasingly dependent on ground water for agriculture.
- Heavy extraction of groundwater leads to declining water table and salinization of groundwater and soil. Salinization is found to be a common problem in the delta. To combat salinity, farmers use saline water to irrigate coconut and cotton in the coastal belt of new delta zone and the old delta central zone respectively.
- Farmers in Cauvery and Vennar basins- Koradacherry, Kudavasal, Nannilam, Valangaiman and Sirkali blocks are gradually shifting to cotton as an alternate crop for paddy.

As reported by the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, the Government has not conducted any study on the impact of hydrocarbon excavations in the delta districts of Tamil Nadu affecting the farmers of these districts.

Various Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives have been undertaken by the National Oil Companies for the benefit of common people, such as, Water Management, Robotic Scavenging, de-silting of irrigation canals and water bodies, solid waste management initiatives, rural medical camps, infrastructure and equipment support for primary health centers, smart class rooms in Govt. schools, relief services during natural calamity, infrastructure development, sports etc.
