

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

RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 821

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 06/02/2026

DIVERSION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND

821. SMT. RENUKA CHOWDHURY:

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

- (a) the extent of land-use change involving agricultural land during the five years, including diversion for industrial, urban, infrastructure or other non-farm purposes, State/UT-wise;
- (b) whether Government has undertaken any assessment of the drivers behind such land-use changes, including urbanisation, industrial expansion, infrastructure projects or real estate development;
- (c) whether the impact of reduction in cultivable land on food production, farm incomes and rural employment has been evaluated, if so, the findings thereof; and
- (d) the area of degraded, fallow or wasteland that has been reclaimed, restored or brought under cultivation during the same period, along with the schemes under which such work was undertaken?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
(SHRI RAMNATH THAKUR)

(a) to (d): Land and agriculture are the state subjects, as per Entry No. 18 of List II (State List) of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. Both the Central and State Governments undertake land acquisition for urbanization, industrial projects, national highways, and other infrastructure developments. The Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare does not maintain State/UT-wise data centrally on diversion of agricultural land for various purposes like urbanisation, industrial expansion, infrastructure projects or real estate development etc., and on area of degraded, fallow or wasteland that has been reclaimed, restored or brought under cultivation during the same period.

As per the latest report on 'Land Use Statistics-at a Glance 2023-24', the Gross Cropped Area has expanded significantly, rising from 201.3 million hectares in 2013-14 to 217.8 million hectares in 2023-24 and the Net Area Sown has remained relatively stable, standing at 138.99 million hectares in 2023-24.

The Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has not undertaken any assessment to analyse the drivers of agricultural land-use change, including urbanisation, industrial expansion and infrastructure development, or to evaluate the impact of reduction in cultivable land on food production, farm incomes and rural employment. However, Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare is implementing several schemes with the objective of increasing food grains production through area expansion and productivity enhancement. Driven by government initiatives and technological advancements, cropping intensity increased from 142.5% in 2013-14 to 156.8% in 2023-24, reflecting a positive shift toward multiple cropping practices, highlighting farmers' enhanced ability to cultivate the same land more than once annually. The food grain production has risen significantly, from 265.05 million tonnes in 2013-14 to 357.73 million tonnes in 2024-25. Horticulture production has also increased from 277.35 million tonnes in 2013-14 to 369.05 million tonnes in 2024-25 (third advanced estimates).

Further, Department of Land Resources is implementing Watershed Development Component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (WDC-PMKSY) which primarily focuses on development rainfed/ degraded lands. The activities undertaken in the scheme, inter alia, include ridge area treatment, drainage line treatment, soil and moisture conservation, rainwater harvesting, nursery raising, pasture development, livelihoods for asset-less persons etc. The measures taken under WDC-PMKSY supplements the effort of the Government to increase the area under cultivation. This scheme has been approved by the Government on 15th December, 2021.

Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has developed several technological measures to increase the area under cultivation. This includes location specific bio-engineering to check soil erosion due to run-off of rainwater, sand dune stabilization and shelter belt technology to check wind erosion and reclamation technology for problem soils in the country. ICAR has also developed the gypsum technology package, consisting of land levelling, bunding, flushing, removal of excess water, good quality irrigation water, application of amendments, selection of crops and efficient nutrient management.
