

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, COOPERATION & FARMERS WELFARE

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 291
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 7TH AUGUST, 2018

MIGRATION OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS

*291. DR. ARUN KUMAR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण
1/2â€â€è
be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the migration of agricultural labourers is taking place due to the support prices for the agricultural produce not being fixed by the Government in a proper manner and if so, the facts thereof;
- (b) whether the farmers are unable to pay proper wages to the agricultural labourers as they are not getting remunerative support prices for their agricultural produce and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government is likely to provide remunerative support price to the farmers for their agricultural produce; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण 1/2â€â€è

(SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 291 DUE FOR REPLY ON 7TH AUGUST, 2018.

(a): Migration of agricultural labour from rural to urban areas is a general phenomenon and is a natural part of the development process. Migration itself is not an abnormal phenomenon and is common all over the world since growth centres which generate demand for labour often tend to concentrate in certain areas. Migration may happen due to other factors also on account of uncertainties associated with agriculture and livelihoods dependent on it like failure of monsoon and drought like conditions in certain parts of the country. There is no direct link between the price policy of agricultural crops and migration owing to the levels of agricultural wages. The minimum wage is fixed from time to time by the State Government under the Minimum Wage Act, 1948. MSP is announced every year by the Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP) recommendations.

(b): Cost of production is one of the important factors in the determination of MSPs. While recommending its price policy, the CACP considers all costs in a comprehensive manner. As such, the cost of production covers paid out cost such as value of hired human labour and also imputed value of family labour. The methodology of computing cost is recommended by Expert Committees from time to time. The cost of cultivation/production include all paid out costs such as those incurred on account of hired human labour, bullock labour/machine labour, rent paid for leased in land, expenses incurred in cash and kind on the use of material inputs like seeds, fertilizers, manures, irrigation charges, depreciation on implements and farm buildings, interest on working capital, diesel/electricity for operation of pump sets etc., miscellaneous expenses and imputed value of family labour. Hence the costs considered are very comprehensive and farmers are able to pay proper wages to the agricultural labourers.

(c) & (d): Farmers are getting remunerative price for their produce. Government has announced the Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for kharif crops 2018-19 on 4th July 2018. This decision of the Government of India is a historic one as it redeems the promise of the pre-determined principle of fixing the MSPs at a level of at least 150 per cent of the cost of production announced by the Union Budget for 2018-19.

MSP is in the nature of minimum price offered by the Government to farmers to procure their produce when market prices tend to fall below MSP, to protect them from distress sales. However, farmers are free to sell their produce to Government agencies or in the open market as is advantageous to them. Cereals like Paddy and Wheat are procured by Food Corporation of India and other designated agencies including by the States under the decentralized procurement system mainly for distribution under the public distribution system (PDS), which takes care of the basic consumption needs of the poor.

The Budget for 2018-19 had announced that NITI Aayog, in consultation with Central and State Governments, will put in place a fool-proof mechanism so that farmers may get adequate price for their produce. NITI Aayog had held consultations on 9th March, 2018 with State Governments and Central Government Departments concerned. The Budget for 2018-19 has also announced the development and upgradation of existing 22,000 rural haats into Gramin Agricultural Markets (GrAMs) to take care of the interests of more than 86 per cent small and marginal farmers. These GrAMs, electronically linked to e-NAM and exempted from regulations of Agricultural Produce Market Committee Act is expected to provide farmers facility to make direct sale to consumers and bulk purchasers.