

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

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 145
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 2ND JULY, 2019

RISE IN CANCER CASES

*145. SHRI RAVNEET SINGH BITTU:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that there has been an exponential rise in cancer cases in Punjab due to excessive fertilizer use leading to its patients travelling to Bikaner by an Indian Railways train which is commonly referred to as 'Cancer Train';
- (b) if so, the corrective steps taken by the Government in this regard;
- (c) whether the Union Government has held discussion with the State Government to tackle the issue and if so, the details of any policy intervention;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to reduce the fertilizer subsidy or invest in research which could nurture safer alternatives; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री

(SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

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

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 145 DUE FOR REPLY ON 2ND JULY, 2019.**

(a) & (b): Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has informed that according to the Cancer Registry of Punjab, the incidence of cancer cases was 100-110 for every 100,000 individuals which is almost equal to the national average. The State Government of Punjab has also reported that the consumption of fertilizer has no link with prevalence of cancer disease in Punjab.

The Central Government supplements the efforts of the State Governments to prevent and control cancer and to provide affordable and accessible care. National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke (NPCDCS) is being implemented for interventions up to the district level which includes awareness generation for Cancer prevention, screening, early detection and referral to an appropriate level institution for treatment. Strengthening of Tertiary Care Cancer facilities Scheme is being implemented to support setting up of State Cancer Institutes (SCI) and Tertiary Care Cancer Centres (TCCC) in different parts of the country.

(c): The Government is making efforts to promote judicious use of fertilizers with the cooperation of State Governments. Integrated Nutrient Management (INM) i.e. soil test based balanced and judicious use of fertilizers (chemical, bio-fertilizers, organic manures like farm yard manure, compost, vermi-compost, green manure etc) is promoted to maintain soil health and its productivity through Soil Health Card (SHC) scheme. Educating farmers through demonstrations, melas, and trainings is an integral part of the scheme.

The Government is promoting organic farming under Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) in a cluster mode. The farmer within a group can avail benefit to a maximum of 2 ha., and the limit of assistance is Rs.50, 000 per ha., out of which 62% i.e., Rs. 31,000 is given as incentives to a farmer for organic conversion, organic inputs, on farm inputs,

production infrastructure, etc., provided directly through DBT during the conversion period of 3 years. Mission Organic Value Chain Development in North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER) promotes organic farming in the States of North Eastern India.

Government of Punjab launched a campaign during Kharif 2018 and Rabi 2018-19 to motivate the farmers for judicious use of fertilizer. In this connection, advertisements were published in print & electronic media. Training camps were organized to motivate the farmer. This yielded fruitful results with consumption of urea being reduced by 0.90 lakh MT and D.A.P by 0.47 lakh MT as compared to the previous year.

(d) & (e): At present there is no proposal to reduce the fertilizer subsidy on urea.

Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is recommending a 4R's approach i.e. right quantity, right time, right mode and right type of fertilizer for judicious use of chemical fertilizers and to reduce their use. In addition, split application, use of slow releasing fertilizers including neem coated urea and growing leguminous crops are also advocated. ICAR also imparts training, organizes front-line demonstrations etc to educate farmers on all these aspects.

ICAR through its Plan Scheme "Network Project on Organic Farming" (NPOF) undertakes research to grow crops using only organic fertilizers. The Council has also developed improved technology for preparation of various types of organic manures such as phosphor-compost, vermi-compost, bio-enriched compost, municipal solid waste compost, etc. from various organic wastes (bio gas slurry can also be used). Besides, the Council through its Plan Scheme "Network Project on Soil Biodiversity-Biofertilizers" has developed improved and efficient strains of biofertilizers specific to different crops and soil types. Liquid Biofertilizer technology with higher shelf-life has also been developed. Presently, the project is being implemented in 16 centres covering 14 States.