

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1582
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 12TH DECEMBER 2023

PROMOTING FARM MECHANIZATION

1582. PROF. SOUGATA RAY:

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

- (a) whether the Government has any projects to promote Farm Mechanization, an essential component in the growth of sustainable agriculture in the country;
- (b) if so, the details of the projects/schemes for the promotion of the same;
- (c) the details of the steps taken/proposed to be taken for the promotion of automation technology in the farming sector;
- (d) the details of the growth of farm machinery in agriculture sector of the country;
- (e) whether the decrease in area of farming causes concern of using machinery in farming sector; and
- (f) if so, the details of steps taken/proposed to be taken for promotion of group farming in the country?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री (SHRI ARJUN MUNDA)

(a) to (f): The adoption of farm mechanization by the farmers depends on various factors such as socio-economic conditions, geographical conditions, crops grown, irrigation facilities etc. Farm mechanization levels assessed by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) for major cereals, pulses, oilseeds, millets and cash crops indicates that the seedbed preparation operation is highly mechanized (more than 70%) for major crops whereas, harvesting and threshing operation is the least mechanized (lower than 32%) for major crops except for rice and wheat crops. In seedbed preparation, mechanization level is higher in rice and wheat crops as compared to the other crops. However, mechanization level for sowing operation is the highest for wheat crop (65%). The mechanization levels in planting/transplanting operation for sugarcane and rice crops are 25% and 35%, respectively. In case of harvesting and threshing, the mechanization levels in rice and wheat crops are more than 60% and very less in cotton crop.

The emphasis of the Government is always to promote farm mechanization for all section of the society with the aim of increasing the reach of farm mechanization to small and marginal farmers and to the regions where availability of farm power is low and promoting 'Custom Hiring Centers' to offset the adverse economies of scale arising due to small land holding and high cost of individual ownership. A Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization' (SMAM) is being implemented through the State Governments w.e.f. 2014-15. Under this scheme, financial assistance @ 40% to 50% of the cost of machines depending on the categories of farmers, is provided for purchase of agricultural machines. Financial assistance @ 40% of the project cost is also provided to rural entrepreneur, (Rural youth and farmer as an entrepreneur), Cooperative Societies of Farmers, Self Help Groups (SHGs), Registered Farmers Societies, Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and Panchayats for establishment of Custom Hiring Centres (CHCs) and Hi-tech hubs of high value agricultural machines. Financial assistance @ 80% of the project cost for the projects costing up to Rs. 10 lakhs is provided to the Cooperative Societies of farmers, Registered Farmer Societies, SHGs, FPOs and Panchayats for setting up of village level Farm Machinery Banks (FMBs). The rate of financial assistance for the North Eastern States for establishment of FMBs is @ 95% of the project cost for the projects costing up to Rs. 10 lakhs. The major focus of the scheme is towards expanding the network for Custom Hiring Services of agricultural machines and equipments to increase utilization of farm power and ensuring availability of farm equipment and machines for small farms. Since inception of the scheme, funds amounting to Rs. 6748.78 Crores has been released. The States have supplied more than 15.55 lakh machines and equipments to the farmers on individual ownership basis and more than 44,000 CHCs/Hi-tech Hubs/FMBs have been established in various States.

The Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare is also implementing Crop Residue Management Scheme from 2018-19 in order to support the efforts of the Governments of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and NCT of Delhi to address air pollution and to subsidize machinery required for management of crop residue. The scheme promotes the usage of machines such as Super Straw Management Systems, Happy Seeder, Super Seeder, Smart Seeder, Surface Seeder, Zero Till Seed cum Fertilizer Drill, Mulcher, Shrub Master/Rotary Slasher, Paddy Straw Chopper, Hydraulically Reversible Mould Board Plough, Crop Reapers and Reaper Binders for in-situ management of paddy straw and Balers & Straw Rakes for ex-situ management of paddy straw.

The Government has recently approved Central Sector Scheme for providing drones to the Women Self Help Groups (SHGs) with an outlay of Rs. 1261 Crores. The scheme aims to provide drones to 15000 selected Women SHGs for providing rental services to farmers for agriculture purpose (application of fertilizers and pesticides).

The Government has launched the Central Sector Scheme for "Formation and Promotion of 10,000 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs)" in the year 2020 to enable farmers to enhance their bargaining power, leverage economies of scale, reduce cost of production and enhance farmers' incomes through aggregation of their agricultural produce. As on 31.10.2023, under the said scheme, 7476 FPOs have been registered.
