

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

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 282
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 16TH MARCH, 2021

CROP LOSSES BY LOCUST ATTACKS

†*282. SHRI MITESH RAMESHBHAI PATEL (BAKABHAI):
SHRIMATI SHARDABEN ANILBHAI PATEL:

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

- (a) whether the locust swarms have caused much loss to crops in the country during the last three years and the current year and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the details of the total crop losses caused by locust attacks during the said period, State-wise;
- (c) the amount of compensation provided by the Government to the farmers affected in this regard; and
- (d) the steps taken by the Government to deal with the problem of locust swarms?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री (SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

(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. 282 DUE FOR REPLY ON 16TH MARCH, 2021.

(a) & (b): Locust attack is not a regular phenomenon and large scale incursions occur characteristically in cycles of heightened activity for a couple of years followed by long periods of inactivity. Locust attack was reported in India during 2019-20 and 2020-21 which is an example of one such large scale locust upsurge, when locust migrated to India after a gap of 26 years. During 2019-20, locust incursion was reported in three States of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Punjab, while in 2020-21, there was locust incursion in ten States of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. However, due to the concerted and coordinated efforts of the Central Government, State Governments and the Farmers the Locust incursions were effectively controlled.

During 2019-20, the State Government of Punjab had reported no crop loss. However, the State Governments of Rajasthan and Gujarat had reported crop loss in 1,79,584 hectares and 19,313.14 hectares respectively.

During 2020-21, State Governments of Punjab, Bihar and Chhattisgarh have reported no crop loss in their States. However, State Government of Haryana has reported minimal crop loss much below the norms of compensation. State Government of Uttar Pradesh has reported a very nominal crop loss in 202.9 hectares. State Governments of Maharashtra and Uttarakhand have reported crop loss of below 33% in 805.80 hectares and 292.4 hectares respectively. State Government of Madhya Pradesh has reported a partial crop loss of 10-15% in 4400 hectares. State Government of Rajasthan has reported crop loss of above 33% in 489.72 hectares. State Government of Gujarat has reported crop loss of below 33% in 6832.20 hectares.

(c): For 2019-20, the State Government of Rajasthan has reported that an amount of Rs. 132.38 crore was disbursed to 79,922 beneficiaries through State Disaster Response Fund as Agriculture Input Subsidy and an amount of Rs. 195.48 crore was disbursed to 1,44,948 beneficiaries through Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana. Against a memorandum submitted by State Government of Rajasthan for financial assistance for damage of crop due to Locust (pest) attack in Rajasthan, Government of India has approved and released assistance of Rs. 68.65 crore from National Disaster Response Fund to the State.

State Government of Gujarat has reported that during 2019-20, an amount of Rs.18.21 crore was provided to 8836 affected farmers. In Gujarat Rs. 13,500 per hectare was provided from State Disaster Response Fund and an additional amount of Rs. 5,000 per hectare was provided from State budget for maximum up to 2 hectares to affected farmers.

For 2020-21, State Government of Uttar Pradesh has reported that an amount of Rs. 3,25,475 was provided to 112 affected farmers. The State Government of Rajasthan has reported that compensation of crop loss is in under process.

(d): To deal with the problem of locust swarms, Government of India strategized its preparedness, strengthened its capacity and enhanced its survey and control capabilities. Awareness campaigns were organized in districts, blocks and villages; advisories and standard operating procedures were circulated and training programs/mock drills were conducted. Control rooms were established at Locust circle offices and districts. WhatsApp groups were created in all affected States for coordination and real time exchange of information. Regular meetings and video conferences were organized with States for better coordination. When Covid-19 lockdown period, awareness literature & videos were shared through virtual medium to orient both functionaries and farmers.

To further strengthen ground control capabilities, 70 new equipment were procured from United Kingdom to increase the number of ground control teams to 104. Additionally, 55 vehicles were procured to strengthen the control potential. More than 200 Central Government personnel were deputed in the control operations.

To strengthen aerial control capabilities, Drones, a Bell Helicopter and customized Mi17 Helicopter of Indian Air Force were deployed for Locust Control. A new dimension was added by using of drones in locust control for the first time in the world after finalizing protocols in coordination with Ministry of Civil Aviation.

The Department coordinated with Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and Indian Embassies in Kenya and Ethiopia for concurrent feedback and regularly participated in meetings conducted by FAO Commission for controlling the desert locust in South West Asia for exchange of information on actual status, movement and control of locust in the region.

Financial assistance was extended to State Governments through various Central Schemes for hiring and purchase of equipments, vehicles and pesticides. Under Sub-mission on Agricultural Mechanization Rs. 2.86 crores were released to Rajasthan and Rs. 2.20 crores to Uttar Pradesh. Under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, Rs. 14 crores were provided to Rajasthan and Rs. 1.80 crores to Gujarat.

Ministry of Home Affairs has included admissibility of hiring of vehicles, tractors with spray equipments for spraying of plant protection chemicals for pest control; hiring of water tankers; and purchase of plant protection chemicals for locust control under new norms of assistance under State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) and National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF). State Governments deployed large number of field functionaries, tractor mounted sprayers and fire tender vehicles for locust control.
