

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3673
TO BE ANSWER ON THE 10TH AUGUST, 2021

CROP DIVERSIFICATION

3673. SHRISUSHIL KUMAR SINGH:

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

- (a) the list of 10 major priorities areas for the Government for development of agriculture in the next ten years;
- (b) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to promote crop diversification in the “Green Revolution States”;
- (c) whether there are any proposals for roping in Artificial Intelligence (AI) for agricultural development in the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the Government’s action plan for roping in AI; and
- (e) the steps being taken by the Government to ensure that agriculture is less resource-intensive and is sustainable (i.e. low water use, prevention of land degradation and desertification)?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री (SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

(a) : The strategies outlined in the National Sustainable Agriculture Mission Document aim at promoting sustainable agriculture through a series of adaptation measures focusing on 10 key dimensions encompassing Indian agriculture namely; (i) improved crop seeds, livestock and fish culture, (ii) water use efficiency, (iii) pest management, (iv) improved farm practices, (v) nutrient management, (vi) agricultural insurance, (vii) credit support, (viii) markets, (ix) access to information and (x) livelihood diversification.

Government has given priority to several other areas for agricultural development under various schemes including Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) to provide a medium-long term debt financing facility for investment in viable projects for post-harvest management infrastructure and community farming assets through interest subvention and financial support; Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) to focus on enhancing water use efficiency at farm level through Micro Irrigation; Sub-Mission on Agroforestry (SMAF) Scheme to encourage tree plantation on farm land along with crops/ cropping system to help the farmers get additional income and make their farming system more climate resilient and adaptive.

(b) : The Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW) is implementing the Crop Diversification Programme (CDP), a sub-scheme of Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) in the Original Green Revolution States viz; Haryana, Punjab & Western Uttar Pradesh since 2013-14 to divert the area of water intensive paddy crop to alternative crops like pulses, oilseeds, coarse cereals, nutri cereals, cotton etc. Efforts of state governments are also supplemented to encourage diversified production of horticultural crops under Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) and state specific needs/priorities under RKVY.

(c) & (d): In line with the recommendation of Doubling Farmers Income Committee, the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National e-Governance Plan in Agriculture (NeGP-A) has been amended to include funding of proposals received from States & Union Territories (UTs) for projects involving use of new & emerging technologies including Artificial Intelligence (AI). Government has also entered into Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with various private sector entities for developing Proof of Concepts (PoCs) for development of Services & Solutions based on Federated Farmers Database, some of which to use Artificial Intelligence.

(e): For promoting sustainable agriculture, Soil Health Cards are issued to provide nutrient status of the soil and recommendation on appropriate usages for improving soil health and fertility. Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)-Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) focuses on water use efficiency at farm level through precision/Micro Irrigation (Drip and Sprinkler Irrigation). Besides, promoting precision irrigation and better on farm water management practices to optimize the use of available water resources, the component also supports micro level water storage or water conservation / management activities to supplement source creation. In addition, Direct Seeded Rice (DSR), System of Rice Intensification (SRI), raised bed sowing, alternate furrow irrigation, mulching, alternate wetting & drying method, laser land leveling, adoption of less water requiring crops/varieties, efficient water application tools are being promoted. The Government has launched several scheme/programme which include inter-alia the National Afforestation Programme, Green India Mission, Watershed Development Component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) which contribute to the target of restoration of 26 million hectares of degraded land and achievement of degradation neutrality with focus on sustainable and optimum utilization of land resources.
