

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2724
TO BE ANSWERED ON 14TH DECEMBER 2021

LOCUSTS ATTACKS

†2724. SHRI RAMESH CHANDER KAUSHIK:
SHRIMATI NAVNEET RAVI RANA:

Will the Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the locusts attack has severely damaged crops in the past few years;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;
- (c) the details of the preparations being made by the Government to save the crops of farmers from the attack of locusts in the near future; and
- (d) whether the Government has conducted any survey to know the reasons for the locusts attack and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE & FARMERS WELFARE

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री (SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

(a) & (b): Locust attack is not a regular phenomenon and large scale incursions occur in cycles of heightened activity for a couple of years followed by long periods of inactivity. Locust attacks were reported in India during 2019-20 and 2020-21 when locusts migrated to India after a gap of 26 years. During 2019-20, locust incursion was reported in three States, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Punjab, while in 2020-21, locust incursion was reported in ten States, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. The details of crop loss in the affected states are given at Annexure.

(c): The aforesaid locust incursions were effectively controlled with concerted and coordinated efforts of the Central Government, State Governments and farmers. Government of India has established 8 Locust Circle Offices in Rajasthan & two in Gujarat, one Locust Warning Organisation (LWO) at Jodhpur, and one Field Station for Investigations on Locusts (FSIL) at Bikaner. Awareness campaigns were organized in the affected States in districts, blocks and villages level; advisories and the Standard Operating Procedures(SOP) circulated and training programs/mock drills were conducted.

Government has also strategized its preparedness, strengthened its capacity and enhanced its survey and control capabilities. The following measures have been taken in this regard:

- 70 new spray equipment have been procured from United Kingdom to increase the number of ground control teams.
- 55 new vehicles have been procured to augment mounted spray equipment.
- To strengthen aerial control capabilities, use of drones and helicopters have been introduced.
- 5 CDA atomizer kits have been ordered from UK based company for strengthening aerial spray capabilities for installation in IAF helicopters.
- Sufficient buffer stock of pesticides is maintained for locust control.
- 65 elocust3g (satellite based device for survey and communication) supplied by FAO.
- Consolidated SOP for locust control is developed and shared with State Agriculture Department in 10 locust-affected States.
- National Workshops on Locust control in collaboration with FAO to train Master Trainers was organised in February and November this year. Mock-drills have been carried out to evaluate the preparedness plan of locust control. Locust Awareness Programme has been organised among the State Govt. Official and farmers to create awareness.
- Temporary camps have been identified for emergency control in case of locust incursion in Scheduled Desert Areas.
- Fortnightly bulletins on status of locusts and latest information are released by the FAO and regularly sent to the State Agricultural Departments.

(d): Desert Locust Survey is conducted every year on more than 150 lakh hectare in Scheduled Desert area of Rajasthan & Gujarat. During survey, data is recorded in elocust3m tab on weather parameter *i.e.*, rainfall, vegetation density, locust population, etc. and same data transferred from tab to Desert Locust Information Officer (DLIO) for further transmission to FAO. FAO collects such survey data from sixty countries and according to survey data FAO issues forewarning, forecasting about locust situation globally.

As per the FAO, the upsurge developed in 2019 due to two cyclones that brought heavy rains to the Arabian Peninsula in May & October 2018 that was exacerbated by Desert Locust outbreaks along the Red Sea coast during the winter of 2019. Further, due to conflicts in the Central & East African Region, regular survey & control operation was severely hampered, thus leading to successive generation of desert locust during early 2019.

India is a member country of SWAC (South West Asia Commission) & DLCC (Desert Locust Control Committee) and regularly participates in monthly meetings conducted by FAO, under South West Asia Commission (SWAC) for exchange of information on actual status, movement and control of locust in the region.

Annexure

**Annexure referred in reply to part (a) and (b) of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question
No. 2724 for reply on 14.12.2021**

2019-2020		
States	Affected Area in hect.	% damage
Rajasthan	1,57,279	Above 33%
Gujarat	22,067	Above 33%
Punjab	-Nil-	-Nil-
2020-21		
Rajasthan	489.72	Above 33%
Gujarat	No crop loss	Nil
Punjab	No crop loss	Nil
Chhattisgarh	No crop loss	Nil
Bihar	No crop loss	Nil
Uttarakhand	Minimal loss	Nil
Haryana	Minimal loss	Nil
Maharashtra	805.8	Below 33%
Uttar Pradesh	28.86	Very nominal
Madhya Pradesh	4400	Partial crop loss of 10-15%
