

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1255
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 30TH JULY, 2024

ENVIRONMENT-FRIENDLY CROPS

1255. Dr. SHASHI THAROOR:

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken cognizance of the effort made by the women from the Uraali Kuruma tribe in Kerala to revive 180 traditional environmentally-friendly varieties of tubers that have been closely associated with their culture but were ignored in the favour of commercial crops; if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government plans to assist these women in their attempt to revive a culturally significant sustainable alternative to commercial crops, if so, the details thereof and if not, reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government has identified similar attempts to revive environment-friendly crops and cropping patterns across the country, if so, the details thereof, State-wise and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) whether the Government plans to introduce a policy to disseminate indigenous farm produce of this kind to a wider audience, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण राज्य मंत्री (SHRI RAMNATH THAKUR)

(a) & (b): The Government has taken cognizance of the effort made by the women from the Uraali Kuruma tribe in Kerala to revive 180 traditional environment friendly varieties of tubers. Further, 'Noorang' a women Self Help Group (SHG) of Thirunelly Panchayat of Wayanad District Comprising of Vettakuruma Scheduled Caste community has been formed under National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) which is involved in cultivation & conservation of more than 180 varieties of tuber crops. State Government of Kerala awards Rs. 1,00,000/- for conservation of traditional tuber crops. During 2022-23, State has also provided assistance of Rs. 16,000 @ Rs. 2000/- per member for germplasm

conservation center per micro cluster under Bhartiya Prakrithi Krishi Padhathi (BPKP). Tribal farmers were also trained under Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA) Farmers Field School.

Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) - Central Tuber Crops Research Institute (CTCRI), Kerala has collected and maintained 31 various tuber crops from Wayanad region comprising cassava, chinese potato, curcuma aromatic, canna, greater yam, xanthosoma, elephant foot yam, taro, sweet potato, potato yam, wild turmeric, arrow root are being maintained in ICAR-CTCRI.

The Government of India has initiated 'Plant Genome Savior Community' award through the 'Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmer's Right Authority (PPV & FRA), Delhi, under which prominent tuber crop grower of Wayanad, Kerala have received 'Plant Genome Saviour Farmer' award for conservation of tuber crops. Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), a Centrally Sponsored Scheme is also implemented in the country for holistic development of the horticulture crops including root and tuber crops.

(c) & (d): ICAR-CTCRI, under Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) and North Eastern and Himalayan (NEH) programme has conducted large number of demonstrations on tuber crop cultivation during rainy season and rice-based cropping system. Under TSP programme, planting materials of greater yam, elephant foot yam, taro, cassava stems, sweet potato vines and tubers are distributed to tribal farmers of Odisha, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh since 2012 and trainings were also organized benefitting farmers. Under NEH programme, trainings were also organized for Meghalaya, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura and Mizoram farmers. ICAR-CTCRI is also popularizing tuber crops based integrated farming systems in tribal areas of various agro-climatic zones.

The ICAR-CTCRI has documented the production systems and indigenous knowledge associated with Mudali crop in Karnataka and also studied the environment friendly crops which are very well in the practice by many of the tribes in Kerala and other parts of the country. ICAR-CTCRI is implementing various programmes for popularizing the crops / farm produce to wider audience through Krishi Melas, exhibitions, developing entrepreneurs, commercializing of minor tuber crop etc.
