

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1287
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 30TH JULY 2024

PROMOTING THE USE OF DRONES IN AGRICULTURE

1287. SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY:

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that the Government has been promoting the use of drone in Agriculture in a very large way across the country;
- (b) if so, the details of utilizing drones for agricultural purposes across the country and the advantages thereof;
- (c) whether it is a fact that the Government has planned for training of Self Help Groups (SHGs) and Jeevika Didis for Drone services across the country, if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the progress made so far and the expenditure in supporting the Drone Didi Scheme across the country?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण राज्य मंत्री (SHRI RAMNATH THAKUR)

(a) to (d): Use of drones in agriculture has distinct advantages like increased efficiency, cost effectiveness due to reduction in cost of spraying, saving of fertilizers and pesticides due to high degree of atomization, saving of water due to ultra-low volume spraying etc. besides reduction of human exposure to hazardous chemicals. The Government has approved 'Namo Drone Didi' as Central Sector Scheme for providing drones to the Women Self Help Groups (SHGs) with an outlay of Rs. 1261 Crores for the period from 2023-24 to 2025-26. 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). Of the total 15,000 drones, first 500 drones have been procured by Lead Fertilizer Companies (LFCs) in 2023-24, using their internal resources and distributed to selected SHGs. Remaining 14500 drones are to be provided under this scheme during 2024-25 and 2025-26 with Central Financial Assistance @ 80% of the cost of drone and accessories/ancillary charges up to a maximum of Rs. 8.0 lakhs per drone. The SHGs have to raise the balance amount (total cost of procurement minus subsidy) as loan under National Agriculture Infra Financing Facility (AIF). Interest subvention @ 3% on the AIF loan will also be available to the SHGs.

Provisions have been made under the scheme to train one of the members of women SHG which include 5 days mandatory drone pilot training and additional 10 days training on operation of drones for spraying nutrients and pesticides. Other SHG member/family member having inclination towards repair of electrical items, fittings and mechanical works will be trained as drone assistant. The scheme will help in infusing advance technology in agriculture for improved efficiency, enhanced crop yield and reduced cost of operation for the benefit of farmers. The scheme will also provide sustainable business and livelihood support to SHGs and they would be able to earn additional income.
