

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-3650
TO BE ANSWERED ON 17TH DECEMBER, 2024

IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL SAFFRON MISSION

3650. SHRI AGA SYED RUHULLAH MEHDI:

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

(a) whether the Government is aware that saffron production in Kashmir has declined by 67.5 per cent between 2010-2023 despite the implementation of National Saffron Mission (NSM) and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether there are only 3 functional bore-wells have been constructed out of the required 128 bore-wells identified in the 2010 study by Sher-E-Kashmir University for saffron cultivation and if so, the reasons for this shortfall and the timeline for completing the remaining infrastructure;

(c) the specific steps taken by the Government to address challenges of climate change, irrigation infrastructure and environmental degradation affecting saffron cultivation in Kashmir along with the outcomes achieved so far; and

(d) whether the Government will consider ordering an enquiry into the implementation and effectiveness of NSM given the significant decline in production despite reported expenditure of Rs. 400 crores and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण राज्य मंत्री (SHRI RAMNATH THAKUR)

(a): As per the estimates provided by the Office of Financial Commissioner (Revenue), UT of Jammu & Kashmir, the production of saffron in Jammu and Kashmir has decreased from 8.0 MT in 2010-11 to 2.7 MT in 2023-24 (3rd Advance Estimates). However, during the last one year from 2022-23 to 2023-24, the saffron production has increased by 8%.

(b): As per the information received from the Agriculture Production Department of UT of Jammu & Kashmir, 85 bore wells with sprinkler irrigation systems have been commissioned and are reportedly functional.

(c): The Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare implemented National Saffron Mission from 2010-11 for the overall development of Saffron sector in Jammu & Kashmir with the following broad objectives to address various challenges including challenges of climate change, irrigation infrastructure and environmental degradation affecting saffron cultivation in Kashmir.

- Rejuvenation/ Replanting of existing saffron area for improving productivity
- Support for creation of irrigation facilities
- Production of planting materials (Public sector nurseries)
- Enhancing product quality through improved post harvest handling
- Mechanisation
- Weather station/e-trading/spot exchange/quality testing and ISO certification
- Infrastructure development of public farms
- Transfer of technologies and Human Resource Development.

The India International Kashmir Saffron Trading Centre (IIKSTC) and subsequent introduction of e-auction facility provided a one-stop solution to the farmers from stigma separation to e-marketing under one roof ensuring seamless convenience and better price realisation.

Several steps were also taken by the UT Administration of Jammu & Kashmir to address these challenges as under:

- Jammu and Kashmir Water Resources (Regulation and Management) Act, 2010 and State Action Plan on Climate Change
- Research and development to create varieties of saffron that are more resilient to environmental challenges
- Environmental regulations to mitigate the impact of industries on saffron fields

(d): Government has not ordered any enquiry into the implementation of National Saffron Mission.
