

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1272

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 11TH FEBRUARY, 2025

INCREASE IN AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE

1272. SHRI GAURAV GOGOI:
SHRI SAPTAGIRI SANKAR ULAKA:
SHRI TANUJ PUNIA:

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

(a) the details of assessment of the recent increase in agricultural employment which now accounts for 46.1% of the workforce as of the year 2024 along with the key drivers behind this trend;

(b) the measures being taken to support individuals returning to agriculture, particularly landless and small-scale farmers, in terms of access to credit, training and infrastructure;

(c) the steps proposed to address the strain on natural resources such as land and water, caused by the growing agricultural workforce, and to promote sustainable farming practices;

(d) the initiatives implemented by the Government to enhance productivity in the agricultural sector and to integrate agro-processing and value-chain development; and

(e) the details of the strategy of the Government to create alternative employment opportunities in rural areas to prevent overcrowding in the agricultural sector?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण राज्य मंत्री (SHRI RAMNATH THAKUR)

(a) to (e): The Government has adopted and implemented the number of policies, reforms, developmental programmes for agriculture sector in the country for farmers including small-scale farmers in terms of access to credit, training and infrastructure such as:

1. Income support to farmers through PM KISAN,
2. Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY),
3. Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)
4. Interest Subvention Scheme
5. Institutional credit for agriculture sector,
6. Fixing of Minimum Support Price (MSP) at one-and-a half times the cost of production,
7. Promotion of organic farming in the country,
8. Per Drop More Crop,
9. Micro Irrigation Fund,
10. Promotion of Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs),
11. National Beekeeping and Honey Mission (NBHM),
12. Agricultural Mechanization,
13. Providing Soil Health Cards to farmers,
14. Setting up of National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) extension Platform,
15. Launch of the National Mission for Edible Oils – Oil Palm,
16. Agri Infrastructure Fund (AIF),
17. Improvement in farm produce logistics, Introduction of Kisan Rail
18. Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH),
19. National Food Security Mission,
20. Rainfed Area Development (RAD) Programme under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY)
21. National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) etc.

Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare through its programmes and schemes has targeted to bring in production efficiency for small and marginal farmers in the country. Sustainable farming practices, prototype integrated farming system models and organic farming packages cropping systems have been developed to provide technological backstopping to small and fragmented land holdings. The developed models increase the income of the farmers with cost reduction for inputs related to fertilizers. Further, Agriculture being a State subject, the State Governments undertake implementation of agricultural schemes/programmes for the welfare of farmers including landless farmers and the Government of India also supplements these efforts through implementation of various central sector/centrally sponsored schemes/programmes. The various schemes/programmes are meant to support States for the welfare of farmers by increasing production, remunerative returns and income support to farmers.

Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) under Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is organizing a number of trainings for farmers (on & off-campus) on 'Importance of Agriculture' and 'Improved Farm Practices' through on farm testing.

The Government is implementing Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) scheme in the Country with mandate of working as Single Window Agricultural Knowledge, Resource and Capacity Development Centre. As part of its activities, the KVKs impart training to the farmers, farm women and rural youth on different aspects of agriculture and allied sectors (Crop Production, Horticulture, Soil Health and Fertility Management, Livestock Production and Management, Home Science/Women empowerment, Agril. Engineering, Plant Protection, Fisheries, Production of Input at site, Agro forestry) for their capacity building.

The Government is implementing Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) in all the States/UTs and Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER) to promote sustainable & organic farming. The schemes stress on end-to-end support to farmers engaged in organic farming i.e. from production to processing, certification & marketing and post harvest management. Training and Capacity Building are integral part of the scheme. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is encouraged eco-friendly approach, which is an encompassing cultural, mechanical, biological and need based chemical control measures. Central Integrated Pest Management Centres located in 28 States and 2 UTs train farmers on IPM. Further, Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) scheme under National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) promotes water use efficiency at the farm level through Micro Irrigation technologies i.e. drip and sprinkler irrigation systems.

Rainfed Area Development (RAD) scheme is being implemented as a component under NMSA from 2014-15 in the country. RAD focuses on Integrated Farming System (IFS) for enhancing productivity and minimizing risks associated with climatic variability.

Soil Health Card (SHC) / Soil Health Management (SHM) scheme is operational through the State Governments under National Project on Management of Soil Health & Fertility. Now, this scheme has been merged as Soil Health Component of Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) from the year 2022-23. The main objective of the scheme is to assist states in promoting Integrated Nutrient Management (INM) through judicious use of chemical fertilizers including secondary and micro nutrients in conjunction with organic manures & bio-fertilizers for improving soil health and its productivity.

The Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (Agri Infra Fund) helps to expand agro-based industries in villages by providing financial support and low-interest loans for developing infrastructure such as cold storage, warehouses, and processing units. The fund supports modern agricultural practices and technology adoption, boosting productivity and promoting diversification into various agro-based sectors aiming to transform rural agriculture, enhance market access, and improve the livelihoods of farmers. It encourages entrepreneurship among farmers, FPOs, and start-ups, creating job opportunities.