

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2973
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 10th MARCH, 2026

DECLINE IN AGRICULTURAL LAND

2973. SHRI MANSUKHBHAI DHANJIBHAI VASAVA:

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

- (a) whether there is a year-on-year decrease in the agricultural land in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof during each of the last three years and the current year;
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to check the said declining trend;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to convert wasteland into cultivable land; and
- (e) 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 BHAGIRATH CHOUDHARY)

(a) to (e) : Land and agriculture are State subjects. As per Entry No. 18 of List II (State List) of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India, land falls under the jurisdiction of State Governments, which are responsible for taking appropriate measures to increase the area under cultivation and ensure optimal use of agricultural lands. However, the Government of India supports these efforts through policy initiatives and budgetary assistance.

As per the latest annual publication "Land Use Statistics-at a Glance 2023-24", the extent of agricultural land in the country has remained relatively stable, reflecting sustained agricultural capacity across the country. The adoption of modern technologies and effective policy interventions has also led to a continuous improvement in cropping intensity, which has risen from 142.5% in 2013-14 to 156.8% in 2023-24, reflecting a positive shift toward multiple cropping practices, highlighting farmers' enhanced ability to cultivate the same land more than once annually. The details of agricultural area in the country during 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 are 180112, 179982 and 179596 thousand hectares, respectively.

Department of Land Resources is implementing Watershed Development Component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (WDC-PMKSY) which primarily focuses on development rainfed/ degraded lands. The activities undertaken in the scheme, inter alia, include ridge area treatment, drainage line treatment, soil and moisture conservation, rainwater harvesting, nursery raising, pasture development, livelihoods for asset-less persons etc. The measures taken under WDC-PMKSY supplements the effort of the Government to increase the area under cultivation. This scheme has been approved by the Government on 15th December, 2021.

Further, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has developed several technological measures to increase the area under cultivation. This includes location specific bio-engineering to check soil erosion due to run-off of rainwater, sand dune stabilization and shelter belt technology to check wind erosion and reclamation technology for problem soils in the country. ICAR has also developed the gypsum technology package, consisting of land levelling, bunding, flushing, removal of excess water, good quality irrigation water, application of amendments, selection of crops and efficient nutrient management.