GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS

DEPARTMENT OF FERTILIZERS

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION **NO. 3498** TO BE ANSWERED ON**: 13.03.2026**

Development of Indigenous Reserves of Fertilizers

3498. SHRI P V MIDHUN REDDY:

Will the Minister of **CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS** be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to develop indigenous reserves of potash so as to reduce the dependence on imports;

(b) the steps taken to ramp up the production of Ammonium Nitrate in order to reduce the dependence on imports;

(c) whether the Government has any plan to offer protection in terms of subsidies or import barriers in order to provide support to indigenous manufacturers of Ammonium Nitrate against cheap imports, particularly from Russia, if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government has a blueprint to promote research and development of green fertilizers and insecticides; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS

(SMT. ANUPRIYA PATEL)

(a): Geological Survey of India (GSI) has accorded priority for exploration of Potash and Glauconite (a potash bearing mineral), identified among the 24 critical and strategic minerals for India, with the objective of identifying potential mineralized zones and augmenting the domestic resource base over the years. Aligning with the objectives of the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM), GSI took up 13 mineral exploration projects on fertilizer minerals (Potash-5 and Glauconite-8) in 2024-25 and 08 exploration projects in 2025-26. Cumulative ore resource augmented by GSI

since MMDR Amendment Act, 2015 for potash is 435.7 million tonne and 1107.1 million tonnes for glauconite across the country at different average grades. To support the Government of India's auction regime, GSI has significantly contributed through its exploration outcomes. Since Amendments to the MMDR Acts, 2015, GSI has handed over 22 resource bearing G2/G3 geological reports for potash (11) and glauconite (11) and 13 Geological Memorandum for potash (8) and glauconite (5) to the Central Government / concerned State governments for consideration in the auctioning process.

Further, the Government is promoting Potassium Derived from Molasses (PDM) which is a by-product of sugar industry having minimum 14.5% potash and can be used by farmers in field as an alternative to MOP (Muriate of Potash with 60% potash content). Thus, PDM can reduce the dependence on imported potash. PDM was notified under Fertilizer Control Order (1985) in 2009, and in order to incentivize the use of PDM, it was inducted under Nutrient Based Subsidy scheme since Rabi, 2021. During Rabi 2025-26, Rs. 345 per tonne of subsidy has been fixed for PDM.

(b): Chemical sector is broadly de-regulated and delicensed sector. The manufacturing, import, export, transportation etc. of Ammonium Nitrate are being regulated by Ammonium Nitrate Rules, 2012. Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation (PESO) issues licenses for manufacture, storage, transportation, import and export of Ammonium Nitrate under these rules. The licenses for manufacturing of Ammonium Nitrate are issued based on Industrial Licenses issued by Department of Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade (DPIIT).

(c): In Budget 2024-25, Basic Custom Duty (BCD) on Ammonium Nitrate has been increased from 7.5% to 10% to support existing and new capacities in pipeline. Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR), Department of Commerce provides a level playing platform to the domestic industry against the adverse impact of the unfair trade practices viz. dumping, actionable subsidies, circumvention etc. from any exporting country by using effective Trade Remedial measures such as anti-dumping and safeguard measures.

(d) & (e): Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has informed that green fertilizers (green manures) are crops grown and incorporated into the soil to improve soil fertility and health. Leguminous green manure crops such as sunhemp, dhaincha, and cowpea can add about 20–30 kg nitrogen per hectare to the soil through biological nitrogen fixation, and their decomposing biomass helps increase soil organic carbon and microbial activity, thereby improving soil structure and water-holding capacity. In green manuring, fresh green plants are ploughed into the soil, whereas brown manuring involves killing the standing cover crop and leaving the dried biomass on the soil surface as mulch. In India, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) conducts research on packages of practices, develops improved varieties of green manure crops, and studies how to integrate them effectively in different cropping systems. ICAR also promotes farmer training, seed production, and distribution of green manure seeds to increase adoption and support sustainable soil fertility management.

With regard to insecticides, the Registration Committee (RC), a statutory body under section 5 of the Insecticides Act, 1968-registers pesticides for use in the country after ensuring their safety and efficacy. In order to promote biopesticides, simplified guidelines have been formulated for their registration. The registration fee for bio-pesticides has been kept minimal compared to that for chemical pesticides in order to encourage their development and use.

Further, provisional registrations for a period of two years along with permission for commercialization are granted to facilitate the availability and wider adoption of new bio-pesticides, thereby promoting the use of safer and environmentally sustainable pest management options in agriculture.

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