

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2635
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 04TH AUGUST, 2026

GLOBALLY IMPORTANT AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE SYSTEMS

2635. SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH:

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

- (a) the details of the financial, technical and institutional assistance provided by the Government to the Kuttanad Agricultural Heritage System, Kerala, after its recognition as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) site by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO);
- (b) the details of the projects sanctioned, funds allocated and expenditure incurred for the conservation and sustainable development of the Kuttanad GIAHS site, year-wise;
- (c) whether the Government has formulated or proposes to formulate a dedicated action plan for the conservation, climate resilience, branding and promotion of the Kuttanad Agricultural Heritage System and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether consultations have been held with the Government of Kerala and other stakeholders for the long-term conservation and management of the site; and
- (e) the further steps proposed to strengthen and promote Kuttanad as a globally significant agricultural heritage landscape?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b): As reported by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), India, the Kuttanad Farming System in Kerala was recognized as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS) in 2013 under the FAO's GIAHS Programme.

As reported by the Government of Kerala, Kuttanad has been declared as a Special Agricultural Zone by the State Government. A comprehensive Kuttanad Package for mitigation of agrarian distress and restoration of the Kuttanad wetland ecosystem was implemented during 2008–2019 through more than 14 implementing agencies. Funding was mobilised through various Central Ministries and schemes, Government of Kerala Plan schemes and Finance Commission grants. As reported by the Kerala State Planning Board, expenditure of about ₹1,013.35 crore had been incurred under the Package up to 31 March 2019.

The International Research and Training Centre for Below Sea Level Farming (IRTCBSF) at Alappuzha undertakes research relating to climate change and salinity intrusion in Kuttanad and develops technologies for improving productivity and farmers' income. Under the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (Detailed Project Report Component), a project titled "Ecological Utilization of Water Hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*) in Kuttanad" was sanctioned during 2022-23 with a project cost of ₹1,513 lakh, against which ₹107.52 lakh has been released.

The Government of India also supports sustainable agriculture, conservation of agro-biodiversity, climate resilience and farmers' livelihoods through various Central Sector and Centrally Sponsored Schemes. Farmers and institutions in the Kuttanad region are eligible for assistance under these schemes, subject to the respective scheme guidelines and the priority proposed by the State Government in the Annual Action Plan of the State. Details of relevant projects and assistance reported in respect of the Kuttanad region are given in the **Annexure**.

In addition, the Ministry of Jal Shakti implemented two flood mitigation projects for Padasekharams of the Kuttanad region during 2014-15 and 2017-18 at a total cost of ₹54.63 crore.

The Government of Kerala has further reported implementation of the following State Plan schemes in the Kuttanad region:

(i) Development of Agriculture Sector in Kuttanad, with a budget provision of ₹7 crore during 2025-26 for strengthening paddy field infrastructure. Since 2020-21, an expenditure of ₹2,017.55 lakh has been incurred for replacement of traditional Petti and Para systems with Vertical Axial Flow (VAF) pump sets.

(ii) Rebuild Kerala Initiative Project for sustainable development of the Kuttanad rice ecosystem and integrated farming, with an outlay of ₹203 lakh.

(iii) Assistance to Paddy Cultivation in Kuttanad, under which financial assistance is provided to paddy farmers.

(iv) Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (NABARD) General, under which two infrastructure projects with a total outlay of ₹1,800 lakh are under implementation.

(c) to (e): The Government of India continues to support the Kuttanad region through various ongoing Central Sector and Centrally Sponsored Schemes, under which assistance is available for sustainable agriculture, climate resilience, farm mechanization, water management, infrastructure development and farmers' livelihoods, subject to the provisions of the respective schemes and the priority proposed by the State Government in the Annual Action Plan of the State.

Financial assistance is available under the Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM) for procurement of suitable farm machinery, including paddy transplanters, combine harvesters, power tillers and weeders, and for establishment of Custom Hiring Centres to improve access to farm machinery for small and marginal farmers. Infrastructure and water management interventions, including de-silting of canals, strengthening of bunds and modernization of pumping systems, are also supported under schemes such as PM-RKVY, while drainage and flood mitigation infrastructure is supported under Rural Infrastructure Development Fund with NABARD assistance. These interventions contribute towards improving productivity, strengthening climate resilience and supporting sustainable agriculture in the Kuttanad region.

Annexure

Annexure Referred in Reply to Part (a) & (b) of the Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No.2635 to be answered on 4th August, 2026 on Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems

Table 1. Details of Bharatiya Prakrithik Krishi Padhati in Kuttanad Region

(Rupees in lakhs)

Year	Allotment	Expenditure
2021-22	191.33	190.47
2022-23	121.80	120.84
2023-24	39.71	36.81
2024-25	49.23	33.69
2025-26	111.03	62.45

Table 2. Details of Soil Health and Fertility Scheme in Kuttanad Region

(Rupees in lakhs)

Year	Allotment	Expenditure
2024-25	23.90	23.90
2025-26	30.76	21.44

Table 3. Sub Mission on Agricultural Extension — SMAE-ATMA

(Rupees in lakhs)

Year	Allotment	Expenditure
2021-22	182.81	182.81
2022-23	185.94	185.94
2023-24	148.10	148.10
2024-25	127.86	127.86
2025-26	182.20	182.20

Table 4. RKVY-DPR - Release of Funds and Expenditure

(Rupees in lakhs)

Year	Released	Expenditure
2021-22	338.47	338.39
2022-23	172.05	171.97
2023-24	0.00	0.00
2024-25	123.02	123.02
2025-26	348.54	291.98
Ongoing project of IRTCBSF	1513.00	107.52

Table 5. Other Project Under PM-RKVY DPR Scheme

(Rupees in lakhs)

Project Name	Year	Sanction Amount	Amount Released During Last 5 Years
Ecological Utilization of Water Hyacinth (Eichornia crassipes) in Kuttanad, Kerala (KE/RKVY-NRM/2022/1499), implemented by IRTCBSF	2022-23	1513	82.98
(continuation of above project)	2025-26	—	24.54

Table 6. Sub Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM)

(Rupees in lakhs)

Year	Allotted	Utilized
2021-22	1591.02	1379.15
2022-23	2086.05	2064.95
2023-24	950.26	47.59
2024-25	381.41	370.40
2025-26	78.83	78.83
