

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE & FARMERS' WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & FARMERS' WELFARE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 267
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 21ST JULY, 2026

IRRIGATION FACILITIES

267. SHRI SELVAGANAPATHI T.M.:

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

- (a) whether the Government has assessed that 315 districts are vulnerable to El Nino and 111 districts in 12 States are of primary concern due to poor irrigation facilities, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that 111 districts with irrigation coverage below 25% have been considered as high priority areas, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) Whether the Government has initiated contingency plans to face the challenge, if so, the details thereof;
- (d) Whether the deficit in rain could directly affect kharif crops; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b): The Government through, Mahalanobis National Crop Forecast Centre (MNCFC) has carried out a spatial analysis to assess the possible impact of El Niño on Indian agriculture. Based on the analysis, 262 districts have been identified as vulnerable districts based on the following criteria:

- Low Surface Irrigation Coverage (< 50%): Districts where less than 50% of the agricultural area is covered by surface irrigation projects, leaving them majorly dependent on monsoon rain
- High Probability of Low Rainfall (> 30%): Districts that have a greater than 30% probability of receiving below-normal rainfall during the monsoon.
- Districts having more than 20000 Hectares sown area during Kharif season 2024-25.

(c): District-level contingency plans have been prepared for the identified vulnerable districts by Indian Council of Agricultural Research-Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture (ICAR-CRIDA) in consultation with the States. Review meetings have already been held with States on the operationalization of district-level contingency measures. The Department is also monitoring the availability of quality seeds, maintaining National Seed Reserve of climate-resilient and short-duration varieties, ensuring adequate availability of fertilizers, and regularly reviewing the implementation of contingency plans.

(d) & (e): Deficit or below normal rainfall during the South-West Monsoon may affect the sowing, growth and productivity of Kharif crops, particularly in rainfed areas where agriculture is largely dependent on monsoon rainfall. The Government is monitoring the monsoon situation and crop progress on a continuous basis. Advisory has been issued to the States on El Nino preparedness, which includes seed planning, KCC and PMFBY coverage drives etc. Advisory has been issued to Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation for judicious use of water for irrigation. Further, States have been advised to make intensive use of Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission Gramin (VB-G RAM G) funds for rejuvenating water conservation structures, such as farm ponds, check dams, canal desilting, and bori bandhans, to maximize rainwater harvesting by trapping every drop of early or residual rainfall and enhancing water availability for agricultural purposes.
