

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2737
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04TH AUGUST, 2026

PROTECTION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND

2737. SHRI CAPTAIN VIRIATO FERNANDES:

Will the Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण राज्य मंत्री be pleased to state

- (a) whether the Government has any national policy or guidelines to discourage diversion of agricultural land, including irrigated/multi-crop and command area lands, for industrial, commercial, tourism or other non-agricultural purposes;
- (b) whether principles contained in National Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy, 2007, recommending that developmental projects be located on wastelands or degraded lands and that acquisition of multi-crop agricultural land be kept to absolute minimum, continues to guide Government policy;
- (c) whether the Government has assessed extent of agricultural and command area lands converted for non-agricultural use in Goa during last five years and, if so, details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has issued any advisory to States to protect fertile agricultural and command area lands from diversion in the name of investment or development; and
- (e) the measures proposed to safeguard such lands in interest of food security and sustainable agriculture?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): Land and agriculture are the state subjects, as per Entry No. 18 of List II (State List) of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. Accordingly, regulation of land, land-use and conversion of agricultural land for industrial or other non-agricultural purposes falls within the jurisdiction of the respective State Governments/Union Territory and is governed by the relevant State/UT specific laws.

The National Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy, 2007, recommended that development projects should, as far as possible, be located on wastelands, degraded lands or unirrigated lands and that acquisition of irrigated and multi-crop agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes should be kept to the minimum and avoided to the extent possible. Subsequently, the Central Government has enacted the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation & Resettlement (RFCTLARR) Act, 2013, which came into force on 01.01.2014, lays down the statutory framework governing land acquisition, compensation, rehabilitation and resettlement, including safeguards relating to the acquisition of multi-crop irrigated land. The Act mandates Social Impact Assessment prior to acquisition to evaluate the impact on livelihoods, agricultural practices and food security. Wherever agricultural land is acquired, compensatory mechanisms, including monetary compensation, rehabilitation

and resettlement benefits, and in some cases, land for land compensation etc. are provided to mitigate the impact on farmers. The Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare does not maintain State/UT-wise data centrally on the extent of agricultural land, including command area lands, converted for non-agricultural purposes across the country including Goa.

(e): The Government of India supplements the efforts of States through appropriate policy measures and schemes aimed at sustainable agricultural development, conservation of natural resources and enhancement of agricultural productivity. The Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is implementing various Central Sector and Centrally Sponsored Schemes including the National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF), National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA), Soil Health & Fertility (SH&F), Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) component under Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY), National Food Security Mission (NFSM) and Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM), National Mission on Edible Oils (NMEO)-Oil Palm, National Mission on Edible Oils (NMEO)-Oilseeds, Mission for Atmanirbharta in Pulses, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY). These initiatives promote sustainable agricultural practices, efficient use of natural resources, soil and water conservation, crop diversification and enhancement of agricultural productivity, thereby contributing to balanced and sustainable development while ensuring judicious use of natural resources and ecological balance.

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, improvement in livelihood/income potential of land etc. The measures taken under WDC-PMKSY supplements the effort of the Government to increase the area under cultivation.

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. ICAR further recommends several agronomic measures to improve the degraded soils and bringing them under crop cultivation, soil test based balanced and integrated nutrient management through conjunctive use of both inorganic and organic sources (manner, biofertilizers etc.) of plant nutrient and location specific soil & water conservation measures for preventing deterioration of soil health and fertility.

As per the Land Use Statistics 2024-25, the Gross Cropped Area has expanded significantly, rising from 198.28 million hectares in 2014-15 to 225.19 million hectares in 2024-25. The adoption of modern technologies and effective policy interventions has also led to a continuous improvement in cropping intensity, which has risen from 142.2% in 2014-15 to 159.7% in 2024-25, reflecting a positive shift toward multiple cropping practices, highlighting farmers' enhanced ability to cultivate the same land more than once annually. Additionally, food grain production has increased from 252.02 million tonnes in 2014-15 to 376.56 million tonnes in 2025-26 (Advance Estimates), while horticulture production has increased from 280.98 million tonnes in 2014-15 to 377.77 million tonnes in 2025-26 (Advance Estimates).
