

Contingency plan to address drought

3041. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:
SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Prime Minister recently reviewed the crop situation in view of less rainfall and asked the Ministry to prepare a contingency plan in this regard;
- (b) if so, whether the Ministry has prepared a contingency plan;
- (c) if so, the details in this regard and the latest situation and how it will impact overall food production; and
- (d) the name of the States under the grip of drought and what kind of help has been rendered to them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS):
(a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Prime Minister recently reviewed the crop situation in view of the less rainfall. The Ministry of Agriculture has also been constantly monitoring the sowing progress and providing required technical advices to the States through weekly videoconferences/meetings, telephonic discussions. Contingency plans suitable to specific agro climatic conditions have been prepared. Under the contingency plans-replacement of main crop with alternate crops like, millets, oil seeds; pulses; planning for short duration varieties of the main crop; planning for protective irrigation by efficient use of available water; and Promoting Technical Package of Practice like direct sowing, less plant spacing, more seed rate etc. are being recommended.

Agriculture production is dependent on various factors such as climatic and edaphic conditions, area coverage, application of required inputs at appropriate time etc. With improvement in monsoon, the sowing/crop coverage of jowar, bajra maize, small millets, oilseeds and cotton has improved. However, there is a decrease in Paddy area mainly in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Chhattisgarh that may adversely impact the production of paddy. As on 27th July, the area coverage under paddy is 168.34 lakh ha, which is 54.68 lakh ha. less than last year's coverage of 223.12 lakh ha.

(d) The States of Assam, Manipur (All districts), Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh have declared drought in some of the districts . An amount of Rs 271.31 crores has been released to the States of Assam, Bihar, Manipur and Uttar Pradesh as a central share of Calamity Relief Fund (CRF). Additional assistance is also provided from National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) on submission of memorandum for assistance by the affected States. States have been given flexibility to utilise the funds provided under Crop Development programs of Ministry of Agriculture such as Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana. National Food Security Mission to meet the contingent situations in the event of deficient rainfall, particularly for purchase and distribution of additional quantity of seeds, support for micro-irrigation, etc.