

(b) whether there has been any study/survey conducted to find out the cause; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. As per studies conducted by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), it has been concluded that soil erosion is one of the factors responsible for the decline in agricultural output across the country. The major causes of soil erosion are deforestation, overgrazing, forest encroachment, shifting cultivation, extension of cultivation to marginal lands, development activities like mining and road construction, urbanization, etc.

The ICAR has also developed several location specific bio-engineering measures for development of degraded land. Based on these findings/recommendations, Government of India, Ministry of Agriculture is implementing various Watershed Development Programmes, namely; National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPA), Soil Conservation in the Catchments of River Valley Project and Flood Prone River (RVP&FPR), Reclamation and Development of Alkali and Acid Soils (RADAS) and Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSA) for prevention of soil erosion, land degradation and sustaining foodgrain production across the country. Ministry of Rural Development is also implementing a major Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) for restoring ecological balance by conserving and developing degraded lands in the country.

Strategy for food and nutrition security

2639. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether National Commission on Farmers has suggested a comprehensive medium term strategy for food and nutrition security in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government in this regard;

(c) whether Government has included such suggestion in the National Agriculture Policy;

(d) if so, whether the National Agriculture Policy has succeeded in providing food and nutrition security in the country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (e) The National Commission on Farmers (NCF) had

suggested an elaborate medium-term strategy for food and nutrition security in the country. Based on this and consultations with the State Governments, the Government of India approved the National Policy for Farmers (NPF), 2007 which *inter-alia* provides for a well defined Food Security Policy and constitution of a Cabinet Committee on Food Security.

A Plan of Action for operationalisation of the National Policy for Farmers, 2007 has been circulated to the Central Ministries/Departments concerned and the State Governments in October, 2008 for necessary action.

Most of the provisions contained in the NPF, 2007 are being addressed through various schemes and programmes being implemented by Government. All these policy initiatives and programmes which are aimed at increasing the agriculture production as well the income levels have contributed in ensuring food security in the country.

Production of kharif and rabi crops

2640. SHRI SABIR ALI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the impact of recent rainfall on kharif and rabi crops; and
- (b) the estimated production of these crops during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Several States reported damage to Kharif crops due to cyclonic storms/heavy rains/floods/landslides/cloudburst etc.

In Jammu and Kashmir about 20-30% of Kharif area was affected in the districts of Jammu, Samba and Rajouri due to heavy rains and hailstorms; both standing crops as well as harvested paddy crop were affected resulting in lodging of standing crop and shattering of grains. In Punjab, Kharif crop in two Blocks in Ropar district was affected. Similarly, Himachal Pradesh reported 5-10% crop loss due to heavy rains, snow falls and hailstorms. In valley land of hills of North Eastern region, Paddy crop was affected to some extent due to silt/sand deposition. In Andhra, cyclonic heavy rains in October, 2010 damaged the crops in an area of 364298 ha. in 17 districts. Mainly paddy crop was affected severally resulting in loding of standing paddy crop in an area of about 149101 ha. Similar kind of damage to Kharif crop area was reported by the States of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Gujarat.

The moisture received due to recent rains have brightened the prospects of Rabi crops such as Wheat, Pulses, Oilseeds; late sown Paddy and contingency crops. In Tamil Nadu, Rabi crops have been benefited from the recent cyclonic rains and State has reported increase in water level in all irrigation tanks. The estimated production of Kharif crops as per 1st advance estimates released by Directorate of Economics and Statistics is enclosed as Statement.