

Dry land farming

1889. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government provides funds for pulses and oilseed villages in rain fed areas and for water harvesting, watershed management and soil health to enhance productivity of the dry land farming areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the share of Karnataka in this regard during last three years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A Special Initiative for Pulses and Oilseeds in Dryland Areas by organizing 60,000 Pulses and Oilseeds Villages in Rainfed areas has been taken up during 2010-11 as a sub-scheme under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana with an outlay of Rs. 300 crore. The sub-scheme is being implemented in seven major oilseeds and pulses States including Karnataka in the identified 6000 clusters covering 60000 villages in hub and spoke model. During the current year, States are creating farm mechanization hubs to provide services on custom hiring services to pulses and oil seeds growers largely. The States are also dovetailing supply of critical inputs available under oil seeds development programme of ISOPOM and pulses production programs of NFSM for supplementing the efforts for enhancing the productivity in identified villages and fields.

(c) Karnataka has been allocated a sum of Rs. 33.00 crore for 2010-11. Rs. 16.50 crore has been released to the State as first installment.

Farmer oriented agriculture policy

1890. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that share of agriculture in GDP has come down from 55 per cent (1950-51) to 17 per cent (2008-09) and yet 70 per cent people in the country depend upon it for their livelihood;

(b) if so, the long term measures being taken to increase its productivity;

(c) whether Government feels it necessary to completely revamp the agricultural system; and

(d) if so, what steps will be taken for making the agricultural policy to be farmer oriented in the real sense of the term?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) As per the official data, the share of Agriculture and Allied sector to total GDP (at 1999-2000 prices) was 55.1% in 1950-51 and 17.0% in 2008-09. The sector provides employment to around 52% of the workforce.

(b) to (d) For revitalization of agricultural sector, improvement in production and productivity, stepping up the growth rates of the sector, and enhancement of the incomes of the farmers, the Government has already taken many initiatives like Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, National Food Security Mission, National Horticulture Mission, setting up of National Rainfed Area Authority and Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority, Micro Irrigation, Support to State Extension Programmes for Extension Reforms Scheme, Agriculture Debt Waiver and Debt Relief Scheme, National Agricultural Insurance Scheme, Comprehensive Credit Package, Revival of Short-term Cooperative Credit Institutions, Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oilpalm and Maize, etc.

The Government has also announced a National Policy for Farmers in 2007, incorporating many of the recommendations of the National Commission on Farmers that are aimed at the revival of the Indian agriculture with special emphasis on the economic well being of the farmers.

Further, initiatives like extending the green revolution to the eastern States, organising 60,000 "pulses and oil seeds villages" in rain-fed areas and sustaining the gains already made in the green revolution areas through conservation farming etc. have been announced in the Union Budget 2010-11 to give fillip to the agricultural sector.

Development of horticulture

1891. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that horticulture is gaining importance and significance in the country;

(b) if so, the financial aid given to the small farmers to develop horticulture in their farms;

(c) whether Government has any plan to develop horticulture through the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government is aware that horticulture has gained significant importance and hence transformed the production scenario with the implementation of its two Centrally Sponsored Missions, namely Horticulture Mission for North East and Himalayan States (HMNEH) and National Horticulture Mission (NHM). The financial assistance admissible under each of the missions to the small farmers is given in Statement-I and II (*See* below).

(c) and (d) Horticulture plantation is one of the permissible activities under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005, on individual lands owned by households belonging to the Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes or Below Poverty Line families or to beneficiaries of land reforms or to the beneficiaries under the Indira Awas Yojana of the Government of India or that of small farmers or marginal farmers as defined in the Agriculture Debt Waiver and Debt Relief Scheme, 2008.