

Statement*Bird flu outbreaks during last one year*

Sl. No.	Period	State affected	Number of Epicenters	No. of birds culled (in lakhs)	Compensation paid (in INRs. lakhs)
1.	8th September, 2011	Assam	1	0.15	6.52
2.	19th September, 2011	West Bengal	2	0.49	19.29
3.	11th January, 2012	Odisha	1	0.32	24.71
4.	13th January, 2012	Meghalaya	1	0.07	7.89
5.	17th January, 2012	Odisha	1	0.11	5.87
6.	28th January, 2012	Tripura	1	0.06	1.20
7.	4th February, 2012	Odisha	1	0.38	2.86
8.	15th March, 2012	Tripura	1	0.05	0.09
*9.	28th April, 2012	Tripura	1	—	—
TOTAL			10	1.63	68.43

* The outbreak has been declared on 28 April, 2012 only. The control and containment operation is going on.

Shortage of agricultural labourers

†3130. SHRI RAGHUNANDAN SHARMA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the shortage of labourers for farming activities;

(b) whether this shortage has been found to be attributable to the availability of jobs under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGAS);

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether to ensure the availability of labourers for agriculture activities, particularly to ensure that the rural labourers are provided the one hundred days of employment during that period in which it does not have any adverse effect on the work related to the seasonal crops. Government has conducted a review of the MNREGA Scheme?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HARISH RAWAT) : (a) to (c) Some studies carried out in recent years have shown that while Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA) has assisted in renovation of ponds and canals, water conservation and water harvesting structures, drought proofing and tree plantation, flood control, micro and minor irrigation works and land development which will have a positive impact on agricultural productivity, it has also led to increase in the wage rates of agricultural and non-agricultural labourers, reduced the availability of labour for agricultural operations during the peak sowing and harvesting seasons and increased the cost of cultivation.

(d) Since MGNREGA is a demand driven scheme, backed by legislation, State Governments are obliged to provide up to 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every rural household for doing unskilled manual work, if demanded, at any time of the year, as mandated in the Act. Guidelines for convergence of programmes of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme with programmes of Ministry of Agriculture have been circulated to all State Governments in October, 2009. Most of the State governments and District administration have also started planning for inter departmental convergence with different scheme. Different good practice model have been documented and professional institutions have been engaged to monitor the convergence initiative by different ministry. Ministry of Rural Development also review the convergence initiatives during the review meeting with other concerned Ministries and also during the performance review meeting with the State Governments. Ministry had also engaged NIRD and 17 professional institutions for training and capacity building and document convergence initiatives in the pilot districts.

Shortage of cold storage

3131. DR. PRABHAKAR KORE : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that farmers are suffering huge losses due to inadequate storage facilities for preservation of agricultural and allied produces in the country;

(b) if so, the present status of storage capacity in country;

(c) whether Government is making any effort for setting up of adequate number of cold storages; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?