

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?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) and (b) Covered and Cover and Plinth (CAP) storage capacity with FCI and with state agencies is 62.60 million MT for storage of central stock of foodgrains. 29.71 million MT cold storage capacity is available for fruits and vegetables.

(c) and (d) To reduce post harvest losses in fruits and vegetables, credit linked back ended subsidy @ 40% of the project cost in general areas and 55% in case of hilly and schedule areas is provided to entrepreneurs for development of cold storage/controlled/modified atmosphere [CA/MA] infrastructure, reefer vans etc. under the National Horticulture Mission (NHM), Horticulture Mission for North East and Himalayan States (HMNEH) and National Horticulture Board (NHB) schemes presently implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture.

Further, the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MFPI), Ministry of Commerce through Agricultural & Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) and National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) are also providing assistance for setting up of cold storage and post harvest management infrastructure.

#### **Suicide by farmers**

3132. SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether farmers are committing suicides due to poor returns, indebtedness, increased cultivation cost, inadequate institutional credit and imperfect market conditions;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise during the last three years especially in Andhra Pradesh; and

(c) the steps being taken to correct the situation in the Twelfth Five Year Plan by helping farmers in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HARISH RAWAT) : (a) and (b) Causes of suicide by farmers, as reported by State Governments, are manifold which, *inter-alia*, include indebtedness, crop failure, drought, socio-economic and personal. Number of suicides by farmers due to agrarian reasons during past three years, year-wise, as reported by State Governments/UTs, including Andhra-Pradesh, is given in Statement (*See* below).

(c) The Approach Paper to Twelfth Five Year Plan has emphasised on faster, sustainable and more inclusive growth, *inter-alia*, by expansion of farm income, creation of non-farm income opportunities and improvement in productivity of rainfed