

SHORT NOTICE QUESTIONS**Drought in Andhra Pradesh**

4. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the effect of prevailing drought condition on agriculture and farmers in Andhra Pradesh; and

(b) the steps taken by Government to ensure that farmers are assisted to withstand the severe drought this season?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HARISH RAWAT) : (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) The Government of Andhra Pradesh has submitted a Memorandum on 12.01.2012 containing details of loss/damage due to drought. State Government have declared drought in 876 Mandals covering 22 districts of the State on 02.11.2011. Deficit/scanty rains resulted in reduction of sown area (50% and more), poor crop condition, reduced soil moisture, delayed sowings, reduced crop growth period etc.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh reported a production loss of about 3.1 million metric tonnes (MTs) affecting 51.54 lakh farmers. An area of 34.24 lakh hectares of agricultural crop was damaged where reduction in yield was reported to be more than 50%. An extent of 0.45 lakh hectares under horticultural crop was also damaged by more than 50% due to drought in the State.

(b) Government of Andhra Pradesh requested for providing Rs.3006.41 crore from National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) for taking up drought mitigation works/relief measures in the State.

In response, an Inter-Ministerial Central Team (IMCT) visited the State during 5th to 8th February, 2012 for assessment of crop loss/damage due to drought. Government of India has approved an assistance for Rs.706.15 crore eligible under NDRF subject to the adjustment of 75% of balance available in the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) for the drought of 2011. Sanction of Rs.8.00 crore from Special Component of National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) has also been made for repair of damaged drinking water supply works in Andhra Pradesh.

श्री सभापति : शॉर्ट नोटिस क्वेश्चन। ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री नरेश अग्रवाल : माननीय सभापति जी।

12.00 NOON

श्री सभापति : आप बैठ जाइए। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री नरेश अग्रवाल : सर, मेरा पाइंट ऑफ ऑर्डर है।

MR. CHAIRMAN : No, no, you can't raise a point of order in the question hour. Please sit down.

श्री नरेश अग्रवाल : सर, आप मेरी बात तो सुन लीजिए।

श्री सभापति : एक मिनट ठहर जाइए। Let the Short Notice Question be answered.

श्री नरेश अग्रवाल : मेरा पाइंट ऑफ ऑर्डर है, इसे पहले सुन लीजिए।

श्री सभापति : देखिए, पहले आप सुन लीजिए। अभी क्वेश्चन आवर चल रहा है। ...(व्यवधान)... पहले आप यह सवाल हो जाने दीजिए, उसके बाद उठाइए। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री नरेश अग्रवाल : सर, अगर मैं नियमावली के नियमों में हूँ, तो आपको रूलिंग देनी पड़ेगी। ...(व्यवधान)... मैं नियमों की बात कर रहा हूँ।

श्री सभापति : देखिए, आपको मालूम है कि शॉर्ट नोटिस क्वेश्चन्स के रूल्स क्या हैं? ...(व्यवधान)... आप इसके बाद उठाइए, मैं आपसे कह रहा हूँ।

SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM : Sir, I am thankful to the hon. Minister for giving a detailed reply. The total loss was of around Rs. 3000 crores in the last year's drought situation. Sir, 876 Mandals out of 1,000 Mandals spreading over 22 districts in Andhra Pradesh have been declared drought hit because of scanty or deficit rainfall. More than 50 per cent of the crops were lost and the farmers were put to a terrible inconvenience. The estimated loss was of around Rs. 3000 crores. Sir, a Central Team went there in February and gave its assessment. As per the assessment of the IMCT, we were supposed to get Rs. 900 crores. We actually asked for Rs. 1,806 crores, but the Government has given Rs. 706.15 crores. We have also made a representation to the hon. Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN : What is the question?

SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM : When are they going to release the actual amount which is due to the Government of Andhra Pradesh to be distributed among the farmers? This amount is inadequate because the farmer has again been hit recently. A lot of horticulture crop was lost.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please put your question. Don't make a statement.

SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM : When is the hon. Minister going to look into the compensation and enhance it?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : Sir, we have received a Memorandum from the Government of Andhra Pradesh on 12th January, 2012 on the drought situation. The State Government has declared drought in 876 Mandals covering 22 districts on 2nd November, 2011. We had sent a team on 5th February, 2012 to assess the ground level situation and give its recommendations. The initial demand, which was made by the Government of Andhra Pradesh, was Rs. 2,584 crores. When our team visited Andhra Pradesh, the Government of Andhra Pradesh had revised its demand and requested for Rs. 3006 crores. We have got the report of the Committee. The Committee has given its report on the total damages. Sir, Rs. 706.15 crore is the amount eligible under NDRF subject to the adjustment of 75 per cent of balance available in the State Disaster Response Fund, SDRF for the year 2011. That was the recommendation of the Committee.

And, in the Government of India, there is a High Level Committee headed by the Finance Minister, and the Members are my colleague, Shri Chidambaram, the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia, and myself. The Report has come from this Committee, and whatever recommendations have been made by this Committee, those have been accepted. And it is not a question of releasing cheque or draft. We just instruct the SBI that money should be adjusted in their Account. So, the money has reached the State.

SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM : Sir, I have already stated the facts which the hon. Minister has mentioned now. My first supplementary was this. As per the guidelines of the Government of India, the calculated amount works out to Rs.900 crores. But they have released an amount of only Rs.706 crores. I know that there is a Committee. We have approached the Committee members, and we asked them to revisit the whole thing and check how their own officers have worked it out. This has not been answered. Now, my second supplementary is this. I compliment the hon. Minister for his strenuous efforts to release the distress of the farmers to the extent possible. But the nature also, sometimes, does not help us. Added to that, there was the petroleum price hike and the price of fertilizers increased. Also, the support price has been reduced, and the farmers are not getting the remunerative price. So, the cost of cultivation has increased. Now, fortunately, in Andhra Pradesh, thanks to the efforts of the Chief Minister and the Government, we are giving 1,00,000 tonnes of foodgrains this year. Having said that, I have a small appeal to the hon. Minister; he very well understands the vagaries of the weather. Under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), thanks to the UPA Government, every agricultural labour is getting Rs.150. Now farmers, in some places, are feeling that they are not getting the labourers because it is not possible to get them. Now we have a scheme in Andhra Pradesh where one paddy variety is grown, and fifty per cent of the NREGA funds are being given to the farmers to grow that crop...

MR. CHAIRMAN : Your supplementary, please.

SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM : I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to whether he would kindly consider dovetailing NREGA funds with the rest of the agricultural operations so that 50 per cent comes from the NREGA and the rest 50 per cent comes from the farmers. This will release the burden of the farmers to a great extent. This is No.1. This will also reduce corruption because when a farmer gives 50 per cent, he will ensure that the labourer comes and works. In the case of the S.C. and S.T. farmers, the hon. Minister has rightly said that there are a lot of agricultural labourers who are taking farm land on contract basis. This can be given free of cost to them. Therefore, would the hon. Minister kindly clarify whether this can be introduced so that there is no corruption in the MGNREGS, that there is relief for the farmers and there is an overall improvement in the situation?

MR. CHAIRMAN : Krishi writing is no longer a part of the school curriculum, I imagine!

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : Sir, the main question is about drought in Andhra Pradesh and the assessment of the team which had visited Andhra Pradesh. We have accepted their Report, and there are no two opinions on that. I am really grateful to the hon. Member that he has said that even with drought conditions, this year, there is a record production of paddy and a record procurement of paddy has been done in Andhra Pradesh. And the Government of India has taken a lot of efforts. I am really happy that even under a drought situation, we could have such a record production, and the country got a huge quantity of rice from Andhra Pradesh. As regards the second supplementary which he has put, I do not know how it is raised here. The hon. Member raised the point that labourers are not available, that the NREGA labourers should be provided for agricultural purposes. In fact, this particular subject is not dealt with by my Ministry. But certain specific suggestions have been made.

We have too much of foodgrain stock. Instead of wages in rupee currency, a suggestion has been made whether we can provide certain foodgrains to the concerned Department. They are examining it. A second suggestion has been given to the concerned Department whether they can provide a certain number of NREGA workers for agricultural operation. But we have not received any positive response from them.

श्री भरतसिंह प्रभातसिंह परमार : सर, ग्लोबल वार्मिंग का असर हर साल बढ़ता जाएगा और drought की situation मैं हम हर साल compensation तो देते रहेंगे, लेकिन उसका long-term solution क्या है, जैसे अगर drought हो जाए, तो check dams बनाए जा सकें? हमारे गुजरात में लाखों की संख्या में check dams बने हैं, ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is on Andhra Pradesh.

श्री भरतसिंह प्रभातसिंह परमार : तब water level आ पाया है, तो उसका सामना करने के लिए केंद्र सरकार की क्या long-term planning है?

श्री शरद पवार : सवाल यह है कि जैसे गुजरात की बात यहां बताई गई, गुजरात सरकार ने initiative लेकर छोटे-छोटे tanks बनाने का एक बड़ा काम सौराष्ट्र और कुछ दूसरे एरियाज़ में किया है। इसका असर agriculture farmers के लिए अच्छा हुआ है, पर यह काम सिर्फ वहीं होता है, ऐसी बात नहीं है। सभी राज्यों में आजकल इस पर ध्यान दिया जा रहा है और water conservation को ज्यादा महत्व दिया जा रहा है। Each and every drop which we are getting has to be protected, stored, and sub-soil level has to be improved. That is the thinking of the Government of India, and most of the States are working in that direction.

SHRI DEVENDER GOUD T. : Hon. Chairman, Sir, in Andhra Pradesh out of 23 districts, 22 districts are affected by drought. Sir, through you, I would like to know from the hon. Minister—that it is not only this year, but for the last four years, this drought condition has been prevailing in the State—how much amount the State Government has requested you to allocate and how much amount you have released for the State Government. I can say on the floor that absolutely, no drought relief measures are being taken in the State of Andhra Pradesh. Unfortunately, may be, it is because of political condition, and of course, I can say, there is no Governance at all in Andhra Pradesh. I am sorry to say it. Even though you are not releasing any amount to them, and as per your statement, out of Rs. 3000 crores which they asked this year, you released only Rs. 700 crores. I think it is only an adjustment. I too was Revenue Minister for some time. But only 75 per cent of this amount is going to be adjusted. Whatever it may be, I want to know from the hon. Minister how much amount the Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested you to allocate since the last four years and how much amount you have released.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : Sir, as I said, Andhra Pradesh has demanded Rs. 3006 crores for a season, and the Committee which visited had studied the ground level situation. They visited many mandals. They discussed with local Government officials and ultimately, they have recommended Rs. 706 crores. That amount was sent to Andhra Pradesh, and that money has reached Andhra Pradesh.

श्री पुरुषोत्तम खोडाभाई रुपाला : चेयरमैन सर, मैं अभी आंध्र प्रदेश के गोदावरी डिस्ट्रिक्ट में गया था, जो खेती प्रधान डिस्ट्रिक्ट है और माननीय मंत्री जी भी यह जानते हैं। सर, मुझे इस सदन में यह बताते हुए बहुत दुख हो रहा है कि यह drought का सवाल है और drought या अकाल कुदरत की वजह से होता है। पानी नहीं बरसता है, तो अकाल हो जाता है। सरकार की नीतियों की वजह से गोदावरी डिस्ट्रिक्ट के किसानों ने crop holiday रखा है, क्या यह सरकार के ख्याल में है? किसानों ने खेती नहीं की है। शायद हिंदुस्तान के कृषि के इतिहास में यह पहला किस्सा है कि गोदावरी डिस्ट्रिक्ट के किसानों ने खेती नहीं की है। सरकारी नीतियों की वजह से आंध्र का किसान अकाल का सामना कर रहा है, तो इसके बारे में सरकार क्या करेगी, वह मैं जानना चाहता हूँ?

दूसरा, आंध्र के किसानों को हल्दी के भाव नहीं मिल रहे हैं। Procurement तो हो रहा है, मगर वहां की दो प्रकार की हल्दी होती है, जिसमें से एक ही खरीद की जाती है। किसानों को कैसे पता लगेगा कि उन्होंने कैसी हल्दी बोई है? माननीय सभापति जी, यह सवाल आंध्र के किसानों को परेशान कर रहा है, इसलिए मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि मंत्री जी इस बारे में क्या कर रहे हैं?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : Sir, the hon. Member has asked the question regarding the procurement of turmeric. The items that the Government of India procuring are: wheat, rice, tur, etc., and turmeric does not come under this. It is a restricted crop of certain districts and certain States. But, there was a request from the Government of Andhra Pradesh. If the prices of turmeric have gone down, in such a situation, we have to protect the interests of turmeric-producing farmers. We have one scheme called Market Intervention Scheme. As per this Scheme, the Government of India has a right to instruct the State Government concerned that it should start procuring. Suppose, if there is loss then 50 per cent loss will be borne by the Government of India and the remaining 50 per cent is borne by the respective State Government. The Government of Andhra Pradesh has started procurement. The procurement agency is from the State Government. Now, the question is raised that they are differentiating between the varieties. I will check this and give appropriate instructions to appropriate authorities.

श्री पुरुषोत्तम खोडाभाई रुपाला : सर, ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति : पेपर्स ले हो जाने दीजिए। ...(व्यवधान)... आप सुन लीजिए। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री नरेश अग्रवाल : सर, मेरा एक प्वाइंट ऑफ ऑर्डर है। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति : पेपर्स ले हो जाने दीजिए। ...(व्यवधान)... After laying the Papers, you can mention your point.

(THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN) IN THE CHAIR)

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

Report and Accounts (2010-11 to 2011-12) of ICAR, New Delhi and related paper

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND THE MINISTER OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : Sir, I lay on the Table, a copy each (in English and Hindi) of the following papers:—

- (a) Annual Report of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), New Delhi, for the year 2011-12. [Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 6713/15/12]
- (b) Annual Accounts of the Indian Research (ICAR), New Delhi, for the year 2010-11, and the Audit Report thereon.
- (c) Review by Government of the Annual Accounts.
- (d) Statement giving reasons for the delay in laying the papers mentioned at (b) above. [Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 6714/15/12]