

(c) As per the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India, Land falls under the purview of State Governments and, therefore, it is for the State Governments to bring in suitable Policy/Act/Legislation to check the diversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes or to bring new areas under agriculture to neutralize the loss of agricultural area. However, as per the National Policy for Farmers, 2007, it has been recommended that Prime farmland must be conserved for agriculture except under exceptional circumstances, provided that the agencies that are provided with agricultural land for non-agricultural projects should compensate for treatment and full development of equivalent degraded/wastelands elsewhere.

Further, to increase the agricultural land area in the country and for maintaining balance in different types of land uses, the Government is implementing various Programmes/Schemes, such as, (i) National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPA), (ii) Soil Conservation in the Catchments of River Valley Projects and Flood Prone Rivers (RVP & FPR), (iii) Reclamation & Development of Alkali and Acid Soils (RADAS) and (iv) Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSCA).

Incentives to States for improving higher education

*514.DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is planning a scheme to incentivise the States for improving higher education in the country, in view of low and inadequate enrolment;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any proposal to subsume the current scheme of setting up of Model Degree Colleges in 374 educationally backward districts of the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) and (b) The need for central support, to address issues of fund constraints and poor quality education, has been highlighted in the Approach Paper to the Twelfth Plan. A Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) has been envisioned by the

Ministry of Human Resource Development for approval in the Twelfth Plan. Details of the scheme would be worked out after the Twelfth Plan is finalised. The proposed scheme would seek to incentivise State Governments to increase enrolment in State institutions. The proposed new scheme also contemplates incentivizing States to set up new institutions and expand existing ones.

(c) and (d) The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of setting up one Model Degree College, in each of the identified 374 Educationally Backward Districts of the country was launched in the year 2010. Decision to subsume this scheme in the XII Plan proposals is under consideration.

Grass root innovations in agricultural practices

*515.DR. K. V. P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that grass root innovations in agricultural practices are being further analysed for development of appropriate technologies;

(b) if so, the details of such efforts made; and

(c) the achievements made so far in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) In order to utilize the innovative experience of farmers for development of appropriate technologies the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has initiated the task of documenting the profile of farm innovators along with brief of their innovations. So far, six publications containing 441 farm innovations have been published. As the process of documentation has started only in 2010, technologies based on farmers' innovations have not been released so far.

Deployment of TTEs in Sleeper Classes

†*516. SHRI THAAWAR CHAND GEHLOT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had given an assurance in the House regarding availability of conductors and TTEs in train coaches in view of hardships faced by passengers having reserved tickets;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.