

In order to reduce the dependence of farmers on private money lenders, the Government has taken several measures to improve agriculture credit flow from institutional credit sources. These measures, *inter alia*, includes fixation of annual targets for improving agricultural credit flow, provision of crop loans upto Rs. 3.00 lakh @ 4% per annum to such farmers who repay their loan as per the repayment schedule fixed by the banks, extension of benefit of interest subvention scheme to small and marginal farmers having Kisan Credit Card for a further period upto six months for storing their produce in warehouses against negotiable warehouse receipts, collateral free loan upto Rs. 1.00 lakh, implementation of revival package for short term cooperative credit structure in the country etc.

Drought in Andhra Pradesh

2485. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the drought in Guntur and Prakasam districts of Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to ensure that help is provided to farmers of these districts and to prevent labour shortage in farms?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) and (b) The Government of Andhra Pradesh declared drought in 22 districts in 876 mandals including Guntur and Prakasam, during 2011 and submitted a detailed Memorandum seeking financial assistance from the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF).

(c) The Government of India has approved an amount of Rs.706.15 crores for Andhra Pradesh from National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) subject to the adjustment of 75% of balance available in the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) and also release of Rs. 8.00 crore from Special Component of National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) for repair of damaged drinking water supply works in Andhra Pradesh.

Requirement of foodgrains under food security bill

2486. SHRI UPENDRA KUSHWAHA:

DR. K.P. RAMALINGAM:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether massive investments are needed in the agriculture sector to meet the requirements of the Food Security Bill;

(b) if so, the measures taken to achieve the challenge of providing food to all;

(c) whether the present stock of foodgrains can meet the objects of Food Security Bill; and

(d) if not, the steps taken for enhancement of production of foodgrains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) Proposed National Food Security Bill (NFSB) under Section - 38 of chapter-XIV read with schedule-III focuses on the Revitalization of Agriculture with increase in investment in agriculture, including in research and development, extension services, micro and minor irrigation, ensuring remunerative prices, credit, irrigation, power, crop insurance etc.

(b) The Government is implementing Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) under which food grains at subsidized prices are provided to targeted households. The Government is also implementing Other Welfare Scheme (OWS) such as Integrated Child Development Services, Mid Day meal scheme, Annapurna etc. to ensure Food Security of especially vulnerable groups.

(c) and (d) As per the provisions of NFSB and using 2011 Census population, the requirement of food grains for TPDS and OWS prescribed in the bill, is estimated at 60.74 million tons. The stock of food grain available in the Central Pool as on 1st March, 2012 is 54.43 million tons as against the buffer norms of 25 million tons for the quarter beginning 1st January, 2012. The procurement of wheat and rice during 2010-11 was 62.53 million tons and expected procurement of rice and wheat during 2011-12 is 67.12 million tons. With the stock of food grains available in the Central Pool and trends of procurement, it would be possible to meet the estimated requirement of food grains under NFSB. However, Government is implementing several Centrally Sponsored Schemes for increasing the production and productivity of food grains.

Advance assessment for agricultural production

2487. SHRI PARSHOTTAM KHODABHAI RUPALA:

SHRI BHARATSINH PRABHATSINH PARMAR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for not making any assessment by Government in advance about probable requirements and probable supply of various agriculture commodities/crops/fruits/vegetables so that excess agriculture production and acute shortage may be avoided; and

(b) the action taken by Government to cater to the rising food requirements of the increasing population of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) Planning Commission assesses the demand and supply