

During Rabi-2012-13, Government of Kerala has declared drought in 14 districts of the State and sought central assistance of Rs. 492.80 crore for mitigating drought situation. An Inter-Ministerial Central Team (IMCT) has visited the State and assessed the situation.

Insurance of fish ponds

4036. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would impress upon the insurance companies to insure the fish ponds; and

(b) whether Government would give status to fisheries at par with Agriculture?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. CHARAN DAS MAHANT): (a) The existing Centrally Sponsored Scheme "National Scheme of Welfare of fishermen" does not cover insurance of fish ponds and there is no proposal to include insurance of fish ponds during the Twelfth Five Year Plan.

(b) The Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture had requested Ministry of Finance to consider treating Aquaculture at par with Agriculture so that the subsidy, income tax benefits and other incentives available to agriculture could be extended to Pisciculture. The Ministry of Finance has informed that the income from fisheries does not qualify as agricultural income under the Income Tax Act, 1961 and hence is subject to income tax. However, some incentives are available for cooperatives and enterprises for fisheries activities under section 80P, 80-IB (11A) and 35 AD of the Income Tax Act, 1961. In respect of provision of loans at low interest rates, it has been clarified that the provision of interest subvention is available for crop loans upto Rs. 3 lakhs to the farmers. Loans for the purpose of fisheries sector are not covered under this scheme at present.

MSP of paddy

4037. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state whether Government would consider to enhance MSP of paddy due to increase in cost of fertilizer, power, labour and seeds for the current marketing season 2013-14?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TARIQ ANWAR): Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) has submitted its Report on Price Policy for Kharif Crops of 2013-14 Season recommending Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) of Kharif crops, including paddy.

The Government finalises the MSPs recommended by CACP after consultation with the State Governments and concerned Central Ministries/Departments

Irrigation facilities

4038. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the total land area of the country and how much out of this, is agricultural land under cultivation, percentage thereof;
- (b) out of this how much is rainfed, indicating the percentage thereof;
- (c) out of cultivated land how much is irrigated, indicating the percentage thereof;
- (d) out of irrigated land how much is fed by surface water and ground water, indicating the percentage thereof;
- (e) how much new land has been brought under irrigation during Eleventh Plan Period and what was the target thereof; and
- (f) whether developed countries depend very little on rains, statistics thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TARIQ ANWAR): (a) to (d) As per the latest Land Use Statistics data (LUS, 2010-11) compiled by Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Ministry of Agriculture, the details of total land area of the country, agricultural land under cultivation, rainfed and irrigated land are given in the table below:—

Total land area/geographical area of the country in million hectare	328.7
Agricultural land under cultivation/Cultivated Land (Net area sown + current fallows in million hectare)	155.8