

Use of UAV/Drone technology in farming

322. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering to use Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) or the 'Drone Technology' for precision farming, which can help in assessing the exact nature/area of crop damage during natural calamities;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the scheme evolved in this regard; and

(c) whether Government is taking support from experts/institutions for availability of UAV/Drones at cheaper cost?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI MOHANBHAI KALYANJIBHAI KUNDARIYA):

(a) and (b) The new Crop Insurance Scheme - Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) provides for use of UAV/Drone technology for quick estimation of crop losses and early settlement of claims under crop insurance schemes. Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare has launched a pilot project called KISAN [C(K)rop Insurance using Space Technology and geoinformatics] under which it is planned to use drone imaging services for better assessment of crop condition and crop losses/yield in conjunction with ground observation and satellite data in Rabi 2015-16 season.

Also under another project called CHAMAN (Coordinated Horticulture Assessment and Management using geo-iNformatics) for horticulture assessment, drone imaging services will be used for precision farming applications. Since there are no definite guidelines developed by Directorate General of Civil Aviation on use of UAV/Drone, Government has consulted some experts/institutions for availability of UAV/Drone.

(c) Yes, Sir. This Department, for the above mentioned KISAN project, is taking support from Government/semi-Government organizations such as North East Centre for Technology Application and Reach (NECTAR) of Department of Science and Technology; North Eastern Space Applications Centre (NESAC) for availing UAV/drone imaging services at low cost.

MSP for agricultural products

323. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Minimum Support Price (MSP) for various agri-products fixed during last three years; and