

Efficient use of water in agriculture

1458. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards any research report that India uses two to four times more water to produce a unit of major food crops than China and Brazil, if so, the details thereof and Government's response thereto; and

(b) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government for the efficient use of water in agriculture sector, particularly in drought affected States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (DR. SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN): (a) Yes Sir, there are some research reports published during last decade stating that India uses two to four times more water to produce a unit of major food crop than China and Brazil due to low water productivity in India. However, with adoption of modern agronomic practices like raised bed sowing, alternate furrow irrigation, sprinkler irrigation, drip irrigation, direct seeding of rice, system of rice intensification and newer practices of water usage by the Indian farmers, the water requirement for raising food crops in India is comparable with other countries.

(b) The Government advocates drought affected States for crop diversification with low water consuming crops and use of drought tolerant cultivars along with efficient methods of irrigation and water-use efficient agronomic practices. The Government has recently launched Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) by amalgamating ongoing schemes, viz. Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme, Integrated Watershed Management Programme and On Farm Water Management (including drip/sprinkler irrigation) of National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) aiming at 'more crop per drop' and '*Har Khet ko pani*' for benefit of the farming community.

Cultivation of new arhar variety

1459. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether scientists of Indian Agricultural Research Institute have developed a new arhar variety —Pigeon pea that matures in 120 days;

(b) if so, the details thereof, along with its main features; and