

Ministry of Railways has announced a specific mission to eliminate all unmanned level crossings on Broad Gauge in next 3-4 years.

Besides this Zonal Railways have also been advised to deploy Gate Mitras/Gate Counselors to counsel the road vehicle users for observance of safe practice while negotiating UMLCs.

Revival of agriculture sector in Maharashtra

*219. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that consistent droughts and non-availability of climate resilient crop varieties and drip irrigation facilities have adversely affected and caused irreparable setback to agriculture in Maharashtra, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the action Government proposes to take to revive Agriculture sector in the State?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH): (a) Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has launched nationwide project *viz.* National Innovations on Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) to address climate change. One of the components of NICRA deals with evaluation of drought tolerant varieties of different crops raised in the country. Apart from above ICAR institutions in Maharashtra like National Institute of Abiotic Stress Management (NIASM), Baramati, Pune, National Research Centre for Grapes (NRCG), Directorate of Onion and Garlic Research (DOGR) besides Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) have devised doable technologies for drought management. 102 drought tolerant varieties of cereals, pulses, oilseeds, fibers and sugarcane with matching technologies have been developed in the country including 55 varieties for the State of Maharashtra. During the last 3 years (2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15), 2,27, 215 quintal of breeder seeds was also provided to both public and private sector organizations in the country for maintaining effective seed chain through conversion to foundation and certified seeds.

Maharashtra is one of the leading promoters of drip and sprinkler irrigation in the country. So far more than 7.98 lakh hectare have been covered under drip and sprinkler irrigation in the State which is more than 15% of the total coverage in the country under the Centrally sponsored scheme. Further, under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana assistance has been provided to the farmers for adoption of drip and sprinkler irrigation system in their fields. During 2015-16, ₹ 70 crore has been utilized for Micro Irrigation

under PMKSY in Maharashtra. A tentative allocation of ₹ 250 crore has been made during 2016-17 for promoting drip and sprinkler irrigation in Maharashtra.

(b) The following measures have been taken to deal with the situation:

- Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) has been launched with the objective of extending the coverage of irrigation in a focused manner. Under PMKSY focus has been given for: Creation of new water sources; Repair, restoration and renovation of defunct water sources; Construction of water harvesting structures, secondary and micro storage, ground water development and enhancing potentials of traditional water bodies at village level. During 2015-16, ₹ 66985.355 lakh has been released to Govt. of Maharashtra under this scheme.
- Central Research Institute of Dryland Agriculture (CRIDA), in collaboration with State Agricultural Universities has prepared contingency plans for 614 districts including 34 districts of Maharashtra for implementing location specific interventions to sustain agriculture production in the eventuality of any extreme climatic events.
- In order to protect farmers against crop failure due to natural calamities, pests and diseases, weather conditions, Government of India recently introduced the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) for implementation from Kharif 2016.

Shortfall in production of wheat

*220. SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the projected wheat production this year will be less than normal necessitating import of wheat, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the quantity of wheat produced in the years 2014 and 2015 and the quantity procured by FCI and State agencies; and
- (c) the steps proposed by Government to address the shortfall?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH): (a) and (b) No, Sir. As per the Third Advance Estimates released on 9th May, 2016, total production of wheat in the country during 2015-16 is estimated at 94.04 million tonnes against the normal (previous five years average) production of 91.53 million