

Infrastructure in agriculture sector

*238. SHRI RAMKUMAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the income of farmers has not increased to the expected level due to absence of proper and developed infrastructural facilities in Agriculture sector of the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government has introduced various new schemes and incurred heavy public expenditure on development of proper infrastructural facilities in Agriculture sector of the country; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH): (a) and (b) According to "Situation Assessment Survey of Agricultural Households" conducted by National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), the estimated average monthly income per agricultural household rose from ₹ 2115 in 2003 to ₹ 6426 only in 2013. This low level of income was mainly due to low irrigation coverage, poor soil health, inadequate marketing facilities and post-harvest supporting services, and lack of focus on the allied sectors of agriculture in the country.

(c) Agriculture is a state subject and the primary responsibility of the State Governments. Union Government, however, supplements their efforts through implementation of various schemes and programmes. With a view to improve infrastructure in the agriculture sector, Government is implementing various new Schemes, viz, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY- Per Drop More Crop), Soil Health Card, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), e-National Agriculture Market (e-NAM), Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), etc. In addition, under the existing Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) a wide spectrum of interventions is being made to address diverse agricultural development challenges in the States. The TOTAL expenditure on all these schemes was ₹ 7894.13 crore in 2015-16 which rose to ₹ 8079.44 crore in 2016-17. During the current financial year 2017-18, the total expenditure on these schemes is ₹ 8210.02 crore (as on 09-03-2018). Moreover, Government has approved implementation of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY) and setting up of Dairy Processing and Infrastructure Development Fund (DIDF) for development of infrastructure in agriculture and allied sector in the country. The

Government has constituted an Inter-Ministerial Committee on 13.04.2016 to examine issues relating to doubling of farmers' income and recommend a strategy to achieve the same by the year 2022.

Use of drone cameras

*239. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry has given green signal for the use of 'drone' cameras (UAV/NETRA), if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether any survey has been conducted on the use of drones, if so, the details of the research conducted along with the results thereof; and

(c) the details regarding the additional financial burden, which the Ministry will have to bear, on the use of this technology on monthly/yearly/Zone/division-wise basis?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL): (a) Instructions have been issued to all Zonal Railways and Public Sector Units (PSUs) for using Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) as an efficient tool for mapping and monitoring of transportation corridors, projects etc.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Drones are planned to be used as a technological upgradation for effective monitoring of transport corridors and projects as and when needed. As such, benefits and additional funds burden cannot be quantified.

Checking the spread of BG-III cotton cultivation

*240. SHRI T.G. VENKATESH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that unauthorised cultivation of herbicide tolerant cotton seed, popularly known as BG-III cotton, is spreading across the country, which is harmful to the biodiversity;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any State Government has complained to the Central Government to check the spread of BG-III cotton, if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any action has been taken by Government in this regard, the details thereof; and