

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2103
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13/12/2024

REVISION OF MANUAL FOR DROUGHT MANAGEMENT

2103. SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) the rationale for revision of the Manual for Drought Management in 2016;
- (b) whether Government has assessed the impact of the revised manual on the ability of States to qualify as drought-hit, despite facing significant rainfall deficits, if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) the specific reasons for limiting financial responsibility to severe droughts; and
- (d) the measures to ensure efficient local monitoring and data generation in States with limited capacity for monitoring soil moisture and vegetation indicators?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

(SHRI RAMNATH THAKUR)

(a) : The revision of the Manual of Drought Management in 2016 in India was driven by various factors like increased erratic rainfall patterns, newer technological advancements like remote sensing and improved tools for monitoring as well as a need to address short comings in earlier version. The revised manual stresses the need for better coordination between Central and State Governments, and among various Departments. It also provides a more comprehensive and effective, framework for drought management.

(b): The revised drought Manual provides for declaration of drought on indices and factors like rainfall, vegetation, water, crop and others. Mandatory indicators are rainfall deviation or Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI) or dry spell. Impact Indicators are Agriculture, Remote Sensing, Soil Moisture and Hydrology. After the revision of Drought Manual in 2016, States are regularly declaring drought as per the protocols of Drought Manual.

(c) : The State Government is primarily responsible for providing necessary relief measures in the wake of natural calamities. For undertaking relief measures, funds are available with the State Government in the form of the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF). As per Drought Manual guidelines (Chapter 3, point 3.5.1), Memorandum for assistance under the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) need to be submitted, only if the calamity is of a severe nature. However, if SDRF is not able to meet drought relief, States may submit a Memorandum for assistance under NDRF, even if the drought is of moderate category.

(d) : Recognizing the gaps in drought data availability and accessibility across States, a Geoportal for drought monitoring in collaboration with Space Application Centre, ISRO has been developed. This GIS portal, Visualisation of Earth Observation Data and Archival System (VEDAS), hosts data related to multiple drought indicators like rainfall, soil moisture, remote sensing based crop condition, water storages etc. at a single window digital platform. It enables various stake holders for timely and objective assessment of drought situation in a district or tehsil.
