

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 550
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 6TH FEBRUARY, 2024

SUBSIDY TO FARMERS USING DRONES IN FARMING

550. SHRI ARJUN LAL MEENA:
SHRI BHAGIRATH CHOUDHARY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री be pleased to state:

- (a) whether 'agriculture drones' have been used to spray pesticides and other agro-chemicals in various parts of the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government proposes to provide subsidy (grants) to farmers for using drones for spraying chemicals in the fields and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government is encouraging the use of drones to spray pesticides and other agro-chemicals for the benefit of farmers in various districts of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Haryana and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to give any special preference or reservation to the tribals of scheduled areas to purchase drones; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री (SHRI ARJUN MUNDA)

(a): Use of drones in agriculture has distinct advantages like increased efficiency, cost effectiveness due to reduction in cost of spraying, saving of fertilizers and pesticides due to high degree of atomization, saving of water due to ultra-low volume spraying etc. besides reduction of human exposure to hazardous chemicals. Different States are promoting use of drones in agriculture primarily for spraying of pesticides and liquid fertilizers.

(b): Under Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM), financial assistance @ 100% of the cost of drone up to a maximum of Rs. 10 lakhs per drone is provided for its purchase and demonstration on the farmers' fields by the institutes under Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Farm Machinery Training & Testing Institutes, Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), State Agriculture Universities (SAUs), State and other Central Government Agricultural Institutions/Departments and Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) of Government of India engaged in agricultural activities. The Farmers Producers Organizations (FPOs) are provided grants up to 75% of the cost of Kisan Drone for its demonstrations on the farmers' fields. A contingency expenditure of Rs.6000 per hectare is provided to those implementing agencies that do not want to purchase drones but will hire drones for demonstrations from

Custom Hiring Centres (CHCs), Hi-tech Hubs, Drone Manufacturers and Start-Ups. The contingent expenditure to implementing agencies that purchase drones for drone demonstrations is limited to Rs.3000 per hectare. In order to make available drone services to farmers on rental basis, financial assistance @ 40% up to a maximum of Rs. 4.00 lakhs are provided for purchase of drones by CHCs under Cooperative Society of Farmers, FPOs and Rural entrepreneurs. Agriculture graduates establishing CHCs are eligible to receive financial assistance @ 50% of the cost of drone up to a maximum of Rs.5.00 lakhs per drone. For purchase of drones on individual ownership basis, the Small and Marginal, Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe, Women and North Eastern State farmers are provided financial assistance @ 50% of the cost up to a maximum of Rs. 5.00 lakhs and other farmers @ 40% up to a maximum of Rs. 4.00 lakhs.

The Government has also recently approved 'Namo Drone Didi' as Central Sector Scheme for providing drones to the Women Self Help Groups (SHGs) with an outlay of Rs. 1261 Crores. The scheme aims to provide drones to 15000 selected Women SHGs for providing rental services to farmers for agriculture purpose (application of fertilizers and pesticides). Of the total 15,000 drones, first 500 drones will be procured by Lead Fertilizer Companies (LFCs) in 2023-24, using their internal resources for distribution to selected SHGs. Remaining 14500 drones will be provided under this scheme during 2024-25 and 2025-26 and Central Financial Assistance @ 80% of the cost of drone and accessories/ancillary charges up to a maximum of Rs. 8.0 lakhs will be provided to the women SHGs for purchase of drones. The Cluster Level Federations (CLFs) of SHGs may raise the balance amount (total cost of procurement minus subsidy) as loan under National Agriculture Infra Financing Facility (AIF). Interest subvention @ 3% on the AIF loan will be provided to the CLFs. The scheme will help in infusing advance technology in agriculture for improved efficiency, enhanced crop yield and reduced cost of operation for the benefit of farmers. The scheme will also provide sustainable business and livelihood support to SHGs and they would be able to earn additional income of at least Rs. 1.0 lakhs per annum.

(c): As per the information received from the State Governments, the State of Rajasthan during 2022-23 has conducted demonstrations in an area of 634 hectares of farmers' fields in all the districts of Rajasthan for spraying Nano urea. During the year 2023-24, 4509 numbers of Nano urea spray demonstrations were organized in the State. The State of Haryana is actively endorsing the utilization of drones for pesticides and various agrochemicals application. The State is offering drone pilot training to farmers on free of cost basis and so far 82 farmers have undergone training against the target of 500 farmers. The State Government has also set a target of to cover 1,00,000 acres for spraying of Nano urea through application of drones in farmers' fields during Rabi season of 2023-24. The State of Madhya Pradesh has so far provided 30 drones to farmers on subsidy and is promoting the use of drones by raising awareness among farmers through various initiatives such as Kisan Sangoshthi in Yantradoot villages and kisan melas held at different locations throughout the State.

(d) & (e): Provisions under the schemes for promotion of drones in agriculture also aim at overall socio-economic development and welfare of vulnerable sections of the societies including the tribal. Under SMAM, the funds are provided under Tribal Sub-Plan to the concerned State Government / UT on the basis of their proposals. Namo Drone Didi scheme is specific to the women Self Help Groups (SHGs) which are self-governed, peer-controlled information group, of individuals having similar socio-economic backgrounds and are represented by all social groups.
