

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
AGRICULTURE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6047  
ANSWERED ON:26.04.2001  
SEMINAR ON AGRICULTURAL POLICY  
RAMSHETH THAKUR

**Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether a seminar on agricultural policy reforms has been organised recently;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the objective for organising the said seminar;
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to absorb more manpower in agriculture sector; and
- (d) the steps taken by the Government for the development of agricultural infrastructure?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD Y. NAIK)

(a) & (b): No Sir.

(c) & (d): The Central Government is implementing various Central and Centrally sponsored schemes for enhancing of production and productivity in agriculture and allied sectors. New initiatives taken recently are given below:-

- ? Launching of the Macro Management Mode to promote region-specific agricultural planning and development.
- ? Launching of a Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture in the North-Eastern Region.
- ? Formulation of a programme for On-Farm Water Management to exploit ground-water resources in Eastern India.
- ? Operationalization of a Technology Mission on Cotton.
- ? Effective implementation of the National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas.
- ? Implementation of the National Agriculture Insurance Scheme.
- ? Increasing the availability of farm credit through the Kisan Credit Card Scheme, and by ensuring that 18% of net bank credit is earmarked for agriculture.
- ? Expansion of the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund and lowering of the interest rate.
- ? Provision of capital subsidy for construction, modernization and expansion of storages and cold storages.
- ? Formulation of a new subsidy-linked scheme for establishment of rural godowns.
- ? Promotion of the food processing industry and value addition in agriculture through excise exemptions and other interventions.
- ? Provision of a facilitative climate for agriculture exports, inter alia, through establishment of agri-exports zones.
- ? Reforms in seeds sector legislation and procedures to provide a facilitative climate for investment, besides enhancing seed replacement.

Apart from the above, in order to step up capital investment in the agriculture sector, the government is, inter alia, implementing the following Schemes.

- ? Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP) for providing assistance to the States by way of loan for timely completion of selected large and multi-purpose irrigation projects.
- ? Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) within the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development established during the year 1995-96. The RIDF corpus is to be increased from Rs.4500 crore to Rs.5000 crore and interest rate will be lowered from 11.5% to 10.5% in the current year.
- ? National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPA) for holistic and sustainable development of rainfed areas. In addition, Watershed Development Fund has been created with a corpus of Rs.200 crore.
- ? Capital Subsidy Scheme for construction, modernization and expansion of storages and cold storages.