

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:4
ANSWERED ON:21.07.2003
DROUGHT CONDITIONS
ANADI CHARAN SAHU;BHUPENDRASINH PRABHATSINH SOLANKI

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government are formulating any concrete scheme to tackle the drought conditions in the country in future; and
(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAJNATH SINGH)

(a)&(b): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) AND (b) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 4 FOR REPLY ON 21ST JULY, 2003.

(a)&(b): Droughts are complex aberrations of nature caused not only by failure or insufficiency of rains but also due to degradation of local environment, injudicious use of water for irrigation and inappropriate cropping pattern etc. Given the variety of causes and ramifications of drought, it is unlikely that a single scheme could be formulated for the purpose.

At present, there are a number of initiatives and schemes which seek to tackle the various facets of drought. Reference may, in particular, be made to:

- i) Massive extension of coverage in irrigation through investments under the Plan Schemes bringing the total irrigated area to around 40% of the cultivated land;
- ii) Treatment of more than 100 lakh hectares area under schemes of Department of Land Resources under the Ministry of Rural Development viz. Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP), Desert Development Programme (DDP) and the Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP).
- iii) Scheme like the National Water-shed Development Project for Rainfed Areas and Water-shed Development in catchment areas of River valley Projects & Flood Prone Rivers as also the Integrated Afforestation and Eco-Development Project of the Ministry of Environment for optimum use of water to increase productivity and conserve soil.
- iv) Promotion of crop diversification from high water requiring to low water consuming crops particularly in vulnerable areas along with introduction of a large varieties of drought resistant early maturing crops.
- v) The Plan to link rivers for inter-Basin transfer etc.

Besides, to deal with inevitable droughts, there are standing arrangements like the Calamity Relief Fund (CRF), the National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) and the Contingent Crop Plan for various States etc.