

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:730

ANSWERED ON:02.03.2010

MEASURES TO IMPROVE CONDITION OF FARMERS

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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the population dependent on agriculture has declined due to several problems plaguing the farm sector, farmers and agricultural labourers;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (d) the remedial measures taken by the Government to improve the condition of the farmers and to prevent them from switching over to non-farm activities?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION(PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a)to(c): The relevant data in this regard as per the Census of India is as follows:

(in Million)

Year Population Cultivators Agricultural Labourers

1991 846.4 110.7 74.6

2001 1028.7 127.3 106.8

The population, which is engaged in low productivity employment in agriculture, would shift into non-agricultural activities that can provide higher real income per head. Accordingly, while the policy thrust is on improving the income-earning opportunities of those who remain in agriculture, equipping them to access alternative opportunities is also being emphasized. This process is expected to lead to higher farm income and a rise in real wages of agricultural labour whose bargaining power will improve as surplus labour shifts out.

(d): The Government of India has accorded high priority for revitalization of agriculture sector by formulating different schemes to supplement the efforts of the States and by providing resources for the purpose. A key objective of the National Policy for Farmers (NPF), 2007 is to improve the economic viability of farming through substantially improving net income of farmers. The policy provisions include, inter-alia, Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, National Food Security Mission, National Bamboo Mission, National Horticulture Mission, Micro Irrigation Schemes, Watershed Development Programme, Integrated Nutrient Management and Integrated Pest Management and Macro Management of Agriculture. In addition to these major initiatives, adequate care has been taken to ensure decentralization and participation in decision making and in implementation of the Schemes/Programmes with a view to improving the condition of farmers.