

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1207  
ANSWERED ON:02.08.2010  
DROUGHT AFFECTED AREAS  
Rawat Shri Ashok Kumar

**Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether starvation and poverty prevail in the rural areas due to drought in various States in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to reorient their schemes/programmes for rural development dovetailing the immediate needs of drought affected rural people in the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the other steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to explore a permanent solution to the drought problem?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRADEEP JAIN 'ADITYA')

(a) & (b) The Ministry of Rural Development does not maintain the information on starvation and poverty prevailing in the rural areas due to drought in various States in the country.

(c) to (e) Mahatma Gandhi NREGA provides legal guarantee of 100 days of employment to every registered rural household on demand for doing unskilled manual work. The choice of works suggested in the Mahatma Gandhi NREG Act address causes of chronic poverty like drought, deforestation, soil erosion, so that the process of employment generation is on a sustainable basis. Moreover, in the backdrop of deficient rain fall in several States, direction have been issued to meet full labour demand. This Ministry issued an advisory on 29th June, 2009, to drought affected States asking that assessment be made of additional labour under NREGS and shelf of projects be prepared accordingly. Subsequently, on 27th October, 2009 a detailed advisory was issued which clearly laid out 11 action points which the States could incorporate in their NREGA action plan to mitigate the impact of drought.

Under the Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) funds are allocated to States/UTs on the basis of fixed criteria giving 75% weightage to housing shortage and 25% weightage to poverty ratio. This is an allocation based scheme. Under the scheme, an amount upto 10% of the district's annual allocation under IAY or Rs.70 lakh (including state share), whichever is higher, can be released for reconstruction of houses damaged due to floods, fire, riot, arson etc. out of natural calamity component of IAY.

Department of Land Resources implements Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) in rainfed/degraded lands in the country on watershed basis. While selecting the watershed for new projects, preference is given to those watershed having high poverty index, high percentage of small and marginal farmers, low moisture index and low productivity of land.

Keeping in view the frequent drought situation, the Planning Commission has approved a Special package for implementing drought mitigation strategies in Bundelkhand region at a cost of Rs. 7266 crores to be implemented over a period of 3 years starting 2009-10.

In addition, the Department of Food and Public Distribution also allocates foodgrain at highly subsidized rates for Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) provides safeguards against starvation during natural calamity and lean season through the Village Grain Bank Scheme, being implemented through the State and UT Governments.