

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4395
ANSWERED ON:04.08.2009
AGRICULTURAL LAND
Owaisi Shri Asaduddin

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has developed barren land for agricultural purposes;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to check diversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes?

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): According to the concepts & definitions of land uses, barren land includes all land covered by mountains, deserts, etc. which cannot be brought under cultivation except at an exorbitant cost and is classified as unculturable land located in isolated blocks or within cultivated holdings. As such, there is no comprehensive scheme/programme for the development of barren land.

With a view to prevent soil erosion and land degradation, Government of India, Ministry of Agriculture is implementing various Watershed Development Programmes, namely, National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPR), Soil Conservation for Enhancing the Productivity of Degraded Lands in the Catchments of River Valley Project and Flood Prone River (RVP & FPR), Reclamation and Development of Alkali & Acid Soils (RADAS) and Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSCA) in the country. Under these programme, upto end of X Five Year Plan about 18.77 million ha. of degraded land has been developed and parts of such developed lands are put to agricultural purposes to maintain balance in different types of land uses.

As per the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India, Land falls under the purview of the State Governments and, therefore, it is for the State Governments to bring suitable legislation to check the diversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes.