

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2354
ANSWERED ON:16.08.2011
KUTTANAND PACKAGE
Kodikunnil Shri Suresh

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has sanctioned any agriculture package for Kuttanad region;
- (b) if so, the details of the amount sanctioned, released and utilised thereon;
- (c) the status of the implementation of the said package alongwith the achievement made thereon and the monitoring mechanism put in place;
- (d) whether the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation has recommended to declare the said region as Special Agricultural Zone; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS(SHRI HARISH RAWAT)

(a) to (c): Yes, Madam. For development of Kuttanad Wetland Ecosystem as part of Rehabilitation Package for the farmers in suicide prone districts of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Maharashtra, the Government has granted 'in-principle approval for providing financial support of Rs.1840.75 crore for implementing various programmes/ interventions suggested by M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation. As reported by the State Government of Kerala, Rs.1020 crore has been sanctioned under various ongoing schemes. So far Rs.88 crore has been released, out of which Rs.60 crore has been utilized.

For speedy implementation of Kuttanad package, Government has approved constitution of an implementation mechanism consisting of Kuttanad and Alappuzha Prosperity Council, Task Implementation and Management Committee and a Project Management Unit. Besides, Government has constituted a Coordination Committee for sorting out the implementation issues in the package.

(d) & (e): Yes, Madam. Considering the uniqueness of Kuttanad agriculture, particularly the predominantly practiced paddy farming and the fragile wetland system, M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation(MSSRF) has recommended to declare the region as Special Agricultural Zone (SAZ) to promote eco-system friendly farming, generation of additional economic activity, promotion of investment, creation of employment opportunities and development of farming infrastructure.

The State Government of Kerala has reported that Rs.300 crore has been approved by 13th Finance Commission for Implementing the task relating to declaring Kuttanad as SAZ.