

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2167

ANSWERED ON:27.03.2012

CONDITION OF FARMERS

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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether as per a recent survey conducted by the Government, the condition of farmers hailing from backward regions/rainfed areas of the country including Karnataka is very pathetic;
- (b) if so, the outcome of the survey;
- (c) whether the Government proposes, to launch new schemes to diversify the activities of farmers into various non-agricultural areas to supplement their income;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to help the farmers in the said areas of the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (DR. CHARAN DAS MAHANT)

(a) & (b): The Ministry of Agriculture has prepared a report on the State of Indian Agriculture 2011-12 and has laid it in both Houses of Parliament. The report is also uploaded on the website of the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, www.agricoop.nic.in. The report emphasizes the need for bridging the yield gaps in the low productivity regions by effective technology dissemination which can be combined with an efficient supply and service system and raising of the production frontier in the high productivity regions by strengthening and reorienting agricultural R&D, reducing regional disparities, targeting rain fed areas, emphasis on development of states in eastern India, etc. with an increasing pressure of population and a decreasing per capita availability of cultivable land, there is a need to enhance cropping intensity without compromising land productivity. To enhance productivity, easy and reliable access to inputs such as quality seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation, access to suitable technology tailored for specific needs, the presence of support infrastructure and innovative marketing systems to aggregate and market the output from large number of small holdings efficiently and effectively are necessary. With the declining share of agriculture to GDP, the continuing high pressure of population on agriculture and the increasing fragmentation of land holdings leading to decreasing availability of cultivated land area per household, the agriculture sector alone would hardly be in a position to create additional employment opportunities to sustain the livelihood of the rural households. This calls for creation of additional employment opportunities in the non-farm and manufacturing sectors. This requires suitable skill development of the people so as to gainfully employ them in non-farm activities to make agriculture viable in a sustainable manner.

(c) & (d): Currently a major emphasis is laid on skill development for improving employment and livelihood opportunities for the poor. Towards this end a three-tier structure consisting of

(i) the Prime Minister's National Council on Skill Development

(ii) the National Skill Development Coordination Board (NSDCB), and

(iii) the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) is created. The Prime Minister's National Council has outlined the core operating principles which, inter alia, advocate the need for co-created solutions for skill development based on partnerships between States, civil society, and community leaders. The emphasis is on making skills bankable for all sections of society including the poorest of the poor.

(e): With a view to attend to skill development requirements, the Ministry of Agriculture & Food Processing Industries is imparting vocational education and training programmes, besides the regular under-graduate, post graduate and Ph.D. courses, in agricultural extension, use of agricultural implements and machinery, soil conservation, cooperative education and training, food processing; testing and quality management and entrepreneurship development through its various institutions.