

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
AGRICULTURE  
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:319

ANSWERED ON:19.03.2013

DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE SECTOR

Botcha Lakshmi Smt. Jhansi;Rao Shri Sambasiva Rayapati

**Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government had constituted a Commission for suggesting ways and means to sort out the problems being faced by the agriculture sector in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the follow-up action taken by the Government on the major recommendations of the Commission for development of the agriculture sector and the achievements made so far, in this regard;
- (c) whether the major issues affecting the agriculture sector in the country have been highlighted in the 12th Five Year Plan;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the action plan of the Government thereon along with the funds earmarked for the agriculture sector during the said Plan; and
- (e) the mechanism put in place to monitor/oversee the development of the sector?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 319 DUE FOR REPLY ON 19TH MARCH, 2013.

(a) & (b): The National Commission on Farmers (NCF) was constituted under the Chairmanship of Prof. M.S. Swaminathan. The terms of reference of the Commission, inter-alia, included working out a comprehensive medium term strategy for food and nutrition security; propose methods of enhancing the productivity; profitability and sustainability of the major farming systems; suggest measures to attract and retain educated youth in farming; suggest reforms to enhance investment in agri-research; recommend measures for the credit, knowledge, skill and technological empowerment of women; and suggest methods of empowering elected members of Panchayats. The Commission submitted five reports to the Government over a period of time starting from December, 2004. The Commission submitted its fifth and final report on 4.10.2006. Along with the final report, the Commission also submitted 'Draft National Policy for Farmers' containing important recommendations to address problems being faced by farmers in a comprehensive manner to improve economic viability of farming and to thereby substantially increase the net income of farmers.

Based on 'Draft National Policy for Farmers', and after consultation with State Governments, National Policy for Farmers (NPF), 2007, was finalized and approved by the Government and was laid on Table of Lok Sabha on 26.11.2007. An Inter-Ministerial Committee finalized Plan of Action for Operationalisation of NPF, 2007 which was circulated to all State Governments as well as Central Ministries/Departments concerned for follow up action.

(c) & (d): While acknowledging the marked improvement in performance of agriculture sector during the 11th Plan, it has been noted in the 12th Plan document that several policy imbalances exist that can prove to be major handicaps for further development of the sector such as shrinking land base, dwindling water resources, adverse impact of climate change, shortage of farm labour and increasing costs and uncertainties associated with volatility in international markets.

To meet these challenges, Government has taken several steps to revitalize agriculture sector and improve condition of farming community on sustainable basis by increasing investment, improving farm practices, rural infrastructure and delivery of credit, technology and other inputs, extension, marketing, etc. Various programmes/schemes for the development of agriculture sector are being implemented in a decentralized manner with flexibility to State Governments to formulate and implement appropriate projects to suit their specific requirements. The focus of Government is primarily on expansion of farm income, creation of non-farm income opportunities, improvement in productivity of rainfed agriculture, increasing coverage of farming areas under protective irrigation and forging appropriate backward and forward linkages. Other measures taken by the Government for the benefit of farmers include enhancement in minimum support prices of agricultural commodities, increase in credit flow to agriculture sector, debt waiver/relief, interest subvention on crop loans, etc.

Outlay of Rs. 1,34,746.00 Crore has been made for the agriculture sector in the 12th Five Year Plan.

(e): The implementation of various schemes/programmes is being monitored by the Ministry on regular basis. Independent agencies are also engaged to conduct impact evaluation studies.