

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3420

ANSWERED ON:17.03.2015

DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURAL MARKETS

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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has proposed to launch a first-of-its-kind Kisan Mandi to connect farmers directly to consumers in various States of the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to use technology to digitise market services, if so, whether this project will be scaled to other cities in the country as well;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the time by which these mandis are likely to be operationalised;
- (e) whether the Government also proposes to open mandis including cumin seed mandis in Barmer area of Rajasthan for sale of crops produced in the country; and
- (f) if so, the other steps taken by the Government to strengthen the marketing system in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MOHANBHAI KUNDARIA)

(a) & (b): Yes Madam. Following the declaration by the Government of National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi on 2.9.2014 deregulating fruits and vegetables beyond the markets/market yards/sub-yards of three important Agriculture Produce Marketing Committees (APMCs) including Azadpur, the Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) launched the Delhi Kisan Mandi at Alipur, North Delhi to provide a direct trading platform for farmers and Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs). The Delhi Kisan Mandi is to be developed into a physical as well as an online platform to enable trading in agricultural commodities directly between producers and bulk/retail consumers. Meanwhile, soft launch of the physical transactions through the Mandi started in October, 2014. The Department of Agriculture & Cooperation (DAC) has also advised all other State Governments to utilize SFAC's technical support in initiating such Kisan Mandis in their States with suitable amendments to their respective APMC Acts.

(c) & (d): The Department has recently approved, a Central Sector Scheme on "Promotion of National Agricultural Market through Agri- Tech Infrastructure Fund (ATIF)" for Rs.200 crores to be implemented during 2014-15 to 2016-17. It is proposed to utilise the ATIF for migrating towards a National Market through implementation of an appropriate common e-market platform that would be deployable in 642 regulated wholesale markets across States and Union Territories (UTs) in the first phase. The timeline for operationalization is till 2016-17, however, actual implementation will depend largely on the initiatives and proposals from States/UTs.

(e): As agri marketing is administered by the States, the onus for opening of new mandis is with them. Further, as informed by Government of Rajasthan, at present opening of cumin seed mandi in Barmer area of Rajasthan is not under consideration of Rajasthan Government.

(f): To strengthen the marketing system in the country, the department has taken many measures which, inter-alia, include implementation of Central Sector of Integrated Scheme for Agricultural Marketing (ISAM). Under the scheme, assistance is provided towards creation of market infrastructure including storage; Venture Capital Assistance is provided to projects that provide market linkages to farmers; assistance for capacity building of farmers and other stake holders; and support for strengthening Agmarknet portal which provides information on prices and arrivals of agri commodities in wholesale regulated markets, etc.

Moreover, the Department is pursuing the States to reform their agri marketing sector to provide more alternatives other than the regulated wholesale markets/APMCs for sale of farmer produce so that the farmer can opt for most remunerative option. These channels are contract farming, private markets, e-markets, direct marketing, farmer-consumer markets. So far, 17 States have reformed their APMC Acts in respect of contract farming, direct marketing and private markets.

Further, in addition to the ATIF scheme mentioned above, the Government has also recently approved the Price Stabilisation Fund (PSF) Scheme for Procurement and Distribution of perishable agri-horticultural Commodities to control price volatility of these commodities.