

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:32

ANSWERED ON:25.11.2014

INCOME OF FARMERS

Gawali (Patil) Ms. Bhavana;Kumar Dr. Virendra

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether income from farming is insufficient for a large number of farmers;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether the farmers in the country are shifting to other profession as farming has become unremunerative and if so, the details thereof, State-wise;
- (d) whether the Swaminathan Committee has made any suggestion/recommendation to ameliorate the economic condition of the farmers and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government to increase the income of the farmers and make the agriculture a viable profession?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH)

(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. 32 DUE FOR REPLY ON 25TH NOVEMBER, 2014.

(a) to (c): As per Agriculture Census 2010-11, about 85% of the operational holdings are held by small and marginal farmers. Such holdings are generally too small to generate sufficient income for the farmers. Besides several measures to enhance agriculture production and productivity and creating infrastructure to forge suitable backward and forward linkages, Government has also focused on the aggregation of such farmers into groups to enable them to participate more effectively in the markets and realize better prices for their produce.

The shift in the workforce from agriculture (primary) sector to secondary and tertiary sectors is a normal phenomenon of the development process. The total number of agricultural workers in the country, comprising cultivators and agricultural labourers, increased from 234.1 million in 2001 to 263.1 million in 2011, as per Census 2011. However, the percentage of agricultural workers out of the total number of workers in the country fell from 58.2% to 54.6% during this period. The State/ UT-wise, number of agricultural workers are given in Annexure.

(d): The National Policy for Farmers (NPF), which is based on the recommendations of National Commission on Farmers under the Chairmanship of Prof. M.S Swaminathan, was approved in 2007. The policy aims to improve the economic viability of farming by, inter alia, asset reforms in respect of land, water, livestock, fisheries and bio- resources; support services; initiatives for special category farmers and special regions; attracting youth and other policy measures for ensuring well- being and livelihood security of the farmers.

Major provisions regarding support services include supply of good quality seeds and disease-free planting material, issue of soil health passbooks, integrated pest-management system, region and crop-specific implements and machinery, timely, adequate and easy institutional credit at reasonable interest rates, coverage of farmers under a comprehensive national social security scheme, effective implementation of Minimum Support Price (MSP) across the country, development of food grain market infrastructure and terminal markets for agriculture, rural non-farm employment initiative for farm households, etc.

(e): Government has taken several steps to revitalize the 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 institutional credit flow to agriculture sector, debt waiver/relief,

interest subvention on crop loans, revival package for strengthening Short Term Rural Cooperative Credit Structure, Crop Insurance, integrated farming system, promoting cultivation of cash crops and supplementing farmer's income through poultry, fisheries , bee-keeping, etc.