

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, COOPERATION AND FARMERS WELFARE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4892
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 23RD JULY, 2019

OUTBREAK OF LOCUSTS

4892. SHRI BIDYUT BARAN MAHATO:
SHRI SANJAY SADASHIV RAO MANDLIK:
SHRI SUDHEER GUPTA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Indian and Pakistani officials have held a discussion over a possible outbreak of locusts and possible joint action to tackle it recently;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the decisions taken in this discussion;
- (c) whether an alert has been issued by the Government in all the districts adjacent to the Pakistan border and surveys are being conducted to tackle this situation and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) whether the Locust Warning Organization (LWO) had started gearing up to tackle any major attack by the tropical grasshopper and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री (SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

(a) & (b): The Scheduled Desert Area which span across three States i.e. Rajasthan, Gujarat and Haryana is a summer breeding ground for the Locust. The breeding season of locust span from June/July to October/November every year. The locust swarms normally travel with the wind and enters the Scheduled Desert Area of India through Pakistan. To monitor locust incursion, joint meeting between locust officials of India and Pakistan are held every month during locust season (6 meetings in a year) to exchange locust situation. Recently, two such joint border meetings were held on 19th June and 17th July 2019 at Munabao (India) and Khokhrapar (Pakistan) border respectively. Both countries shared the locust infestation information and control measure taken by them and agreed to continue their control operations in their territories.

(c): Yes, alert has been issued by the Government in all the districts adjacent to the Pakistan border in State of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Haryana and regular surveys are being conducted to tackle locust incursion. There is a continued incursion of Desert locust since 21st May 2019 onwards, from the border areas of Pakistan mainly in the Jaisalmer district of the Rajasthan State. Its presence has also been reported in the Barmer, Jalore, Jodhpur and Bikaner districts of Rajasthan and Banaskantha district of Gujarat. Till 17th July 2019, an area of 52460 hectares area have been surveyed (Jaisalmer - 35840 hectares, Barmer - 7720 hectares, Jalore - 1300 hectares Jodhpur -2100 hectares, Bikaner - 3300 hectares and Banaskantha - 2200 hectares).

(d): The following steps have been taken by the Locust Warning Organization taken to deal with the incursion of Desert locust:

- i. Up to the 17th July, 2019, a total of 19153 hectares have been treated against the said infestation by spraying insecticide (Jaisalmer -14509 hectares, Barmer - 1822 hectares, Jalore - 414 hectares Jodhpur -593 hectares, Bikaner - 1300 hectares and Banaskantha - 515 hectares).
- ii. The staffs of locust warning organization / circle offices are undertaking regular surveys and control operations to check desert locust.
- iii. A total of 177 officers (52 additional officers from Directorate of Plant Protection Quarantine) and 54 nos. of vehicles (10 additional from Directorate of Plant Protection Quarantine and 22 given by the State) have been deployed in the various circle office for assistance in control and survey works. In addition, senior officers of the Department are camping in the infested area and supervising control operations.
- iv. Further, the State Agriculture Department of Rajasthan has posted their 77 nos. of staff including Agriculture Supervisor, Agriculture officers & Assistant Agriculture Officers to various offices in the Jaisalmer districts for assistance in locust control works. The State Government has also constituted various teams comprising senior officers for regular assessment and monitoring of locust situation
- v. Various awareness programs have been organized by the various circle offices for state agriculture officers and farmers.
- vi. Regular Liaison is being maintained with the Forest Department, Border Security Force, State Agriculture Department, District administration and representatives of Gram Sabha/Panchayat.
