

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

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**STARRED QUESTION NO. 58**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23/7/2021

**INITIATIVES FOR MENTAL HEALTH OF FARMERS**

\*58. PROF. MANOJ KUMAR JHA:

Will the Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare be pleased to state:

- (a) the initiatives started for mental health of farmers in different States, especially in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra due to adversities of the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- (b) the number of farmer suicides during this pandemic period?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

**( SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR )**

(a) & (b): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) & (b) OF THE RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 58 FOR 23.7.2021 REGARDING INITIATIVES FOR MENTAL HEALTH OF FARMERS.**

(a): To ensure the mental well being of farmers in the country during the Covid pandemic, the Government took a number of steps to ensure that lives and livelihood were taken care of. Efforts for well being of farmers during the Covid pandemic minimized adverse effects on mental health of farmers. These steps are summarized in **Annexure-I**.

Realizing the impact that COVID-19 may have on the mental health of people including farmers, the Government has taken a number of initiatives to provide psychosocial support during COVID-19. These initiatives include:

- (i) Setting up of a 24/7 helpline to provide psychosocial support, by mental health professionals, to the entire affected population, divided into different target groups viz children, adult etc.
- (ii) Issuance of guidelines/ advisories on management of mental health issues, catering to different segments of the society.
- (iii) Advocacy through various media platforms in the form of creative and audio-visual materials on managing stress and anxiety, and promoting an environment of support and care for all.
- (iv) Issuance of detailed guidelines by the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru- "Mental Health in the times of COVID-19 Pandemic - Guidance for General Medical and Specialized Mental Health Care Settings".
- (v) Online capacity building of health workers by NIMHANS in providing psychosocial support and training through (iGOT)-Diksha platform.

(b): Data on suicides by farmers/cultivators and agricultural labourers are maintained by National Crime Records Bureau. Data beyond 2019 i.e. the pandemic period, is not available.

**Initiatives of MOA&FW during Covid 19 for the agriculture sector**

**❖ EXEMPTION TO AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES FROM LOCKDOWN RESTRICTIONS**

- The Department ensured continuity in farm operations. The activities related to agriculture such as movement of labour, farm machinery etc. were exempted from the lockdown and agriculture related activities carried on as usual.

**❖ PRADHAN MANTRI KISAN SAMMAN NIDHI (PM-KISAN)**

- Release of the financial benefit under PM-KISAN scheme.
- About 10.52 crore farmer families benefitted & Rs.84,600 crore released.

**❖ AGRICULTURAL MARKETING**

- All wholesale mandis were closed on 25.03.2020. However, more than 2,067 markets were made functional to facilitate the farmers during Covid.
- Direct Marketing was facilitated ; FPOs supplied vegetables in nearby cities and towns.
- “KISAN RATH APP” was launched in April, 2020 to facilitate farmers & traders in searching for transport vehicles for movement of agriculture & horticulture produce.
- 415 e-NAM mandis were made operational during the Covid period to take the total e-NAM mandis in the country to 1000.
- As far as paddy is concerned, in comparison to 2019-20 when there were 67127 procurement centres, in 2020-21 during Covid 19 the number of procurement centres were increased to 74609. Similarly, for wheat, the number of procurement centres increased from 14644 to 20163 during the Covid period.

**❖ AGRICULTURAL CREDIT**

- KCC saturation drive started in February, 2020. Till date 218 lakh new KCC applications have been sanctioned.

**❖ HORTICULTURE**

- Indian Railways started Special Parcel Trains since 31.03.2020 which carried perishable products, agro-products & dairy products across the country.

- India's first Kisan Rail started on 7.08.2020 from Devlali to Danapur & second Kisan Rail from Anantpur to Adarsh Nagar on 09.09.2020.

#### ❖ **INTEGRATED NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT**

- Authorization to fertilizer wholesalers /retailers extended by 3 months (whose validity expired during Covid time).
- Fertilizer movement to States was monitored to ensure smooth delivery of fertilizers.

#### ❖ **SEEDS**

- Ensured availability of 153 lakh quintals seed among the farmers against the requirement of 150 lakh quintals for Kharif 2020.
- Movement of more than 1 crore packets of cotton seed in different parts of India was ensured.
- More than 20,000 quintals of seed was transported from Hyderabad to the Northern & Eastern regions of India.
- Validity of Seed Dealers license that expired during the lockdown extended till Sept, 2020.

#### ❖ **AGRICULTURAL MECHANIZATION & TECHNOLOGY**

- "Farm Machinery Mobile App" developed.
- More than 49,029 Custom Hiring Centers were available and more than 1,45,839 agricultural machinery was registered for rent on this App.
- Module of Uberisation of logistics aggregators launched on e-NAM platform. More than 11.37 lakh trucks & 2.3 lakh transporters were linked to this module.

#### ❖ **EXTENSION**

- Circulated SOP related to crop harvesting & threshing during Kharif 2020 to States.
- Short video film on 'Social Distancing during agricultural activities' was launched.
- All India Agri Transport Call Centre launched in April, 2020 for coordination between States for inter-state movement of perishables.
- 454 KCC seats at 21 locations operated between 6 A.M to 10 P.M. Call flow was about 15,000 to 20,000 per day.

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